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THE LIFE OF NAPOLEON I

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Napoleon as First Consul.
from the picture by Isabey in the Museum at Versailles.

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THE LIFE OF NAPOLEON I

INCLUDING NEW MATERIALS FROM THE BRITISH OFFICIAL RECORDS

BY

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"Let my son often read and reflect on history: this is the only true philosophy."—*Napoleon's last Instructions for the King of Rome.*

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DEDICATED

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD ACTON,

K.C.V.O., D.C.L., LL.D.

REGIUS PROFESSOR OF MODERN HISTORY

IN THE UNIVERSITY OF

CAMBRIDGE,

IN ADMIRATION OF HIS PROFOUND

HISTORICAL LEARNING,

AND IN

GRATITUDE FOR ADVICE AND

HELP GENEROUSLY

GIVEN.

PREFACE

AN apology seems to be called for from anyone who gives to the world a new Life of Napoleon I. My excuse must be that for many years I have sought to revise the traditional story of his career in the light of facts gleaned from the British Archives and of the many valuable materials that have recently been published by continental historians. To explain my manner of dealing with these sources would require an elaborate critical Introduction; but, as the limits of my space absolutely preclude any such attempt, I can only briefly refer to the most important topics.

To deal with the published sources first, I would name as of chief importance the works of MM. Aulard, Chuquet, Houssaye, Sorel, and Vandal in France; of Herren Beer, Delbrück, Fournier, Lehmann, Oncken, and Wertheimer in Germany and Austria; and of Baron Lumbroso in Italy. I have also profited largely by the scholarly monographs or collections of documents due to the labours of the "Société d'Histoire Contemporaine," the General Staff of the French Army, of MM. Bouvier, Caudrillier, Capitaine "J. G.," Lévy, Madelin, Sagnac, Sciout, Zivy, and others in France; and of Herren Bailleu, Demelitsch, Hansing, Klinkowstrom, Luckwaldt, Ulmann, and others in Germany. Some of the recently published French Memoirs dealing with those times are not devoid of value, though this class of literature is to be used with caution. The new letters of Napoleon published by M. Léon Lecestre and M. Léonce de Brotonne

have also opened up fresh vistas into the life of the great man; and the time seems to have come when we may safely revise our judgments on many of its episodes.

But I should not have ventured on this great undertaking, had I not been able to contribute something new to Napoleonic literature. During a study of this period for an earlier work published in the "Cambridge Historical Series," I ascertained the great value of the British records for the years 1795-1815. It is surely discreditable to our historical research that, apart from the fruitful labours of the Navy Records Society, of Messrs. Oscar Browning and Hereford George, and of Mr. Bowman of Toronto, scarcely any English work has appeared that is based on the official records of this period. Yet they are of great interest and value. Our diplomatic agents then had the knack of getting at State secrets in most foreign capitals, even when we were at war with their Governments; and our War Office and Admiralty Records have also yielded me some interesting "finds." M. Lévy, in the preface to his "Napoléon intime" (1893), has well remarked that "the documentary history of the wars of the Empire has not yet been written. To write it accurately, it will be more important thoroughly to know foreign archives than those of France." Those of Russia, Austria, and Prussia have now for the most part been examined; and I think that I may claim to have searched all the important parts of our Foreign Office Archives for the years in question, as well as for part of the St. Helena period. I have striven to embody the results of this search in the present volumes as far as was compatible with limits of space and with the narrative form at which, in my judgment, history ought always to aim.

On the whole, British policy comes out the better the

more fully it is known. Though often feeble and vacillating, it finally attained to firmness and dignity; and Ministers closed the cycle of war with acts of magnanimity towards the French people which are studiously ignored by those who bid us shed tears over the martyrdom of St. Helena. Nevertheless, the splendour of the finale must not blind us to the flaccid eccentricities that made British statesmanship the laughing stock of Europe in 1801-3, 1806-7, and 1809. Indeed, it is questionable whether the renewal of war between England and Napoleon in 1803 was due more to his innate forcefulness or to the contempt which he felt for the Addington Cabinet. When one also remembers our extraordinary blunders in the war of the Third Coalition, it seems a miracle that the British Empire survived that life and death struggle against a man of superhuman genius who was determined to effect its overthrow. I have called special attention to the extent and pertinacity of Napoleon's schemes for the foundation of a French Colonial Empire in India, Egypt, South Africa, and Australia; and there can be no doubt that the events of the years 1803-13 determined, not only the destinies of Europe and Napoleon, but the general trend of the world's colonization.

As it has been necessary to condense the story of Napoleon's life in some parts, I have chosen to treat with special brevity the years 1809-11, which may be called the *constans aetas* of his career, in order to have more space for the decisive events that followed; but even in these less eventful years I have striven to show how his Continental System was setting at work mighty economic forces that made for his overthrow, so that after the *débâcle* of 1812 it came to be a struggle of Napoleon and France *contra mundum*.

While not neglecting the personal details of the great man's life, I have dwelt mainly on his public career. Apart from his brilliant conversations, his private life has few features of abiding interest, perhaps because he early tired of the shallowness of Josephine and the Corsican angularity of his brothers and sisters. But the cause also lay in his own disposition. He once said to M. Gallois: "Je n'aime pas beaucoup les femmes, ni le jeu—enfin rien: *je suis tout à fait un être politique.*" In dealing with him as a warrior and statesman, and in sparing my readers details as to his bolting his food, sleeping at concerts, and indulging in amours where for him there was no glamour of romance, I am laying stress on what interested him most—in a word, I am taking him at his best.

I could not have accomplished this task, even in the present inadequate way, but for the help generously accorded from many quarters. My heartfelt thanks are due to Lord Acton, Regius Professor of Modern History in the University of Cambridge, for advice of the highest importance; to Mr. Hubert Hall of the Public Record Office, for guidance in my researches there; to Baron Lumbroso of Rome, editor of the "Bibliografia ragionata dell' Epoca Napoleonica," for hints on Italian and other affairs; to Dr. Luckwaldt, Privat Docent of the University of Bonn, and author of "Oesterreich und die Anfänge des Befreiungs-Krieges," for his very scholarly revision of the chapters on German affairs; to Mr. F. H. E. Cunliffe, M.A., Fellow of All Souls' College, Oxford, for valuable advice on the campaigns of 1800, 1805, and 1806; to Professor Caudrillier of Grenoble, author of "Pichegru," for information respecting the royalist plot; and to Messrs. J. E. Morris, M.A., and E. L. S. Horsburgh, B.A., for detailed communications concerning Waterloo,

The nieces of the late Professor Westwood of Oxford most kindly allowed the facsimile of the new Napoleon letter, printed opposite p. 156 of vol. i., to be made from the original in their possession; and Miss Lowe courteously placed at my disposal the papers of her father relating to the years 1813-15, as well as to the St. Helena period. I wish here to record my grateful obligations for all these friendly courtesies, which have given value to the book, besides saving me from many of the pitfalls with which the subject abounds. That I have escaped them altogether is not to be imagined; but I can honestly say, in the words of the late Bishop of London, that "I have tried to write true history."

J. H. R.

[NOTE.—The references to Napoleon's "Correspondence" in the notes are to the official French edition, published under the auspices of Napoleon III. The "New Letters of Napoleon" are those edited by Léon Lecestre, and translated into English by Lady Mary Loyd, except in a very few cases where M. Léonce de Brotonne's still more recent edition is cited under his name. By "F. O.," France, No. —, and "F. O.," Prussia, No. —, are meant the volumes of *our* Foreign Office despatches relating to France and Prussia. For the sake of brevity I have called Napoleon's Marshals and high officials by their names, not by their titles: but a list of these is given at the close of vol. ii.]

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

THE demand for this work so far exceeded my expectations that I was unable to make any considerable changes in the second edition, issued in March, 1902; and circumstances again make it impossible for me to give the work that thorough recension which I should desire. I have, however, carefully considered the suggestions offered by critics, and have adopted them in some cases. Professor Fournier of Vienna has most kindly furnished me with details which seem to relegate to the domain of legend the famous ice catastrophe at Austerlitz; and I have added a note to this effect on p. 50 of vol. ii. On the other hand, I may justly claim that the publication of Count Balmain's reports relating to St. Helena has served to corroborate, in all important details, my account of Napoleon's captivity.

It only remains to add that I much regret the omission of Mr. Oman's name from ll. 12-13 of page viii of the Preface, an omission rendered all the more conspicuous by the appearance of the first volume of his "History of the Peninsular War" in the spring of this year.

J. H. R.

October, 1902.

Notes have been added at the end of ch. v., vol. i.; chs. xxii., xxiii., xxviii., xxix., xxxv., vol. ii.; and an Appendix on the Battle of Waterloo has been added on p. 577, vol. ii.

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NOTE ON THE REPUBLICAN CALENDAR

The republican calendar consisted of twelve months of thirty days each, each month being divided into three "decades" of ten days. Five days (in leap years six) were added at the end of the year to bring it into coincidence with the solar year.

An I began Sept 22, 1792.
„ II „ „ 1793.
„ III „ „ 1794.
„ IV (leap year) 1795.
* * * *
„ VIII began Sept. 22, 1799.
„ IX „ Sept. 23, 1800.
„ X „ „ 1801.
* * * *
„ XIV „ „ 1805.

The new computation, though reckoned from Sept. 22, 1792, was not introduced until Nov. 26, 1793 (An II). It ceased after Dec. 31, 1805.

The months are as follows:

Vendémiaire	Sept. 22	to	Oct. 21.
Brumaire	Oct. 22	„	Nov. 20.
Frimaire	Nov. 21	„	Dec. 20.
Nivôse	Dec. 21	„	Jan. 19.
Pluviôse	Jan. 20	„	Feb. 18.
Ventôse	Feb. 19	„	Mar. 20.
Germinal	Mar. 21	„	April 19.
Floréal	April 20	„	May 19.
Prairial	May 20	„	June 18.
Messidor	June 19	„	July 18.
Thermidor	July 19	„	Aug. 17.
Fructidor	Aug. 18	„	Sept. 16.

Add five (in leap years six) "Sansculottides" or "Jours complémentaires."

In 1796 (leap year) the numbers in the table of months, so far as concerns all dates between Feb. 28 and Sept. 22, will have to be *reduced by one*, owing to the intercalation of Feb. 29, which is not compensated for until the end of the republican year.

The matter is further complicated by the fact that the republicans reckoned An VIII as a leap year, though it is not one in the Gregorian Calendar. Hence that year ended on Sept. 22, and An IX and succeeding years began on Sept. 23. Consequently in the above table of months the numbers of all days from Vendémiaire 1, An IX (Sept. 23, 1800), to Nivôse 10, An XIV (Dec. 31, 1805), inclusive, will have to be *increased by one*, except only in the next leap year between Ventôse 9, An XII, and Vendémiaire 1, An XIII (Feb. 28—Sept. 23, 1804), when the two Revolutionary aberrations happen to neutralize each other.

THE LIFE OF NAPOLEON I

CHAPTER I

PARENTAGE AND EARLY YEARS

"I WAS born when my country was perishing. Thirty thousand French vomited upon our coasts, drowning the throne of Liberty in waves of blood, such was the sight which struck my eyes." This passionate utterance, penned by Napoleon Buonaparte at the beginning of the French Revolution, describes the state of Corsica in his natal year. The words are instinct with the vehemence of the youth and the extravagant sentiment of the age: they strike the keynote of his career. His life was one of strain and stress from his cradle to his grave.

In his temperament as in the circumstances of his time the young Buonaparte was destined for an extraordinary career. Into a tottering civilization he burst with all the masterful force of an Alaric. But he was an Alaric of the south, uniting the untamed strength of his island kindred with the mental powers of his Italian ancestry. In his personality there is a complex blending of force and grace, of animal passion and mental clearness, of northern common sense with the promptings of an oriental imagination; and this union in his nature of seeming opposites explains many of the mysteries of his life. Fortunately for lovers of romance, genius cannot be wholly analyzed, even by the most

adroit historical philosophizer or the most exacting champion of heredity. But in so far as the sources of Napoleon's power can be measured, they may be traced to the unexampled needs of mankind in the revolutionary epoch and to his own exceptional endowments. Evidently, then, the characteristics of his family claim some attention from all who would understand the man and the influence which he was to wield over modern Europe.

It has been the fortune of his House to be the subject of dispute from first to last. Some writers have endeavoured to trace its descent back to the Cæsars of Rome, others to the Byzantine Emperors; one genealogical explorer has tracked the family to Majorca, and, altering its name to Bonpart, has discovered its progenitor in the Man of the Iron Mask; while the Duchesse d'Abrantès, voyaging eastwards in quest of its ancestors, has confidently claimed for the family a Greek origin. Painstaking research has dispelled these romancings of historical *trouveurs*, and has connected this enigmatic stock with a Florentine named William, who in the year 1261 took the surname of *Bonaparte* or *Buonaparte*. The name seems to have been assumed when, amidst the unceasing strifes between Guelfs and Ghibellines that rent the civic life of Florence, William's party, the Ghibellines, for a brief space gained the ascendancy. But perpetuity was not to be found in Florentine politics; and in a short time he was a fugitive at a Tuscan village, Sarzana, beyond the reach of the victorious Guelfs. Here the family seems to have lived for wellnigh three centuries, maintaining its Ghibelline and aristocratic principles with surprising tenacity. The age was not remarkable for the virtue of constancy, or any other virtue. Politics and private life were alike demoralized by unceasing intrigues; and amidst strifes of Pope and Emperor, duchies and republics, cities and autocrats, there was formed that type of Italian character which is delineated in the pages of Macchiavelli. From the depths of debasement of that cynical age the Buonapartes were saved by their poverty, and by the isolation

of their life at Sarzana. Yet the embassies discharged at intervals by the more talented members of the family showed that the gifts for intrigue were only dormant; and they were certainly transmitted in their intensity to the greatest scion of the race.

In the year 1529 Francis Buonaparte, whether pressed by poverty or distracted by despair at the misfortunes which then overwhelmed Italy, migrated to Corsica. There the family was grafted upon a tougher branch of the Italian race. To the vulpine characteristics developed under the shadow of the Medici there were now added qualities of a more virile stamp. Though dominated in turn by the masters of the Mediterranean, by Carthaginians, Romans, Vandals, by the men of Pisa, and finally by the Genoese Republic, the islanders retained a striking individuality. The rock-bound coast and mountainous interior helped to preserve the essential features of primitive life. Foreign Powers might affect the towns on the sea-board, but they left the clans of the interior comparatively untouched. Their life centred around the family. The Government counted for little or nothing; for was it not the symbol of the detested foreign rule? Its laws were therefore as naught when they conflicted with the unwritten but omnipotent code of family honour. A slight inflicted on a neighbour would call forth the warning words—"Guard thyself: I am on my guard." Forthwith there began a blood feud, a vendetta, which frequently dragged on its dreary course through generations of conspiracy and murder, until, the principals having vanished, the collateral branches of the families were involved. No Corsican was so loathed as the laggard who shrank from avenging the family honour, even on a distant relative of the first offender. The murder of the Duc d'Enghien by Napoleon in 1804 sent a thrill of horror through the Continent. To the Corsicans it seemed little more than an autocratic version of the *vendetta traversale*.[1]

[1] From a French work, "Mœurs et Coûtumes des Corses" (Paris, 1802), I take the following incident. A priest, charged with

The vendetta was the chief law of Corsican society up to comparatively recent times; and its effects are still visible in the life of the stern islanders. In his charming romance, "Colomba," M. Prosper Mérimée has depicted the typical Corsican, even of the towns, as pre-occupied, gloomy, suspicious, ever on the alert, hovering about his dwelling, like a falcon over his nest, seemingly in preparation for attack or defence. Laughter, the song, the dance, were rarely heard in the streets; for the women, after acting as the drudges of the household, were kept jealously at home, while their lords smoked and watched. If a game at hazard were ventured upon, it ran its course in silence, which not seldom was broken by the shot or the stab—first warning that there had been underhand play. The deed always preceded the word.

In such a life, where commerce and agriculture were despised, where woman was mainly a drudge and man a conspirator, there grew up the typical Corsican temperament, moody and exacting, but withal keen, brave, and constant, which looked on the world as a fencing-school for the glorification of the family and the clan.[1] Of this

the duty of avenging a relative for some fourteen years, met his enemy at the gate of Ajaccio and forthwith shot him, under the eyes of an official—who did nothing. A relative of the murdered man, happening to be near, shot the priest. Both victims were quickly buried, the priest being interred under the altar of the church, "because of his sacred character." See too Miot de Melito, "Mémoires," vol. i., ch. xiii., as to the utter collapse of the jury system in 1800-1, because no Corsican would "deny his party or desert his blood."

[1] As to the tenacity of Corsican devotion, I may cite a curious proof from the unpublished portion of the "Memoirs of Sir Hudson Lowe." He was colonel in command of the Royal Corsican Rangers, enrolled during the British occupation of Corsica, and gained the affections of his men during several years of fighting in Egypt and elsewhere. When stationed at Capri in 1808 he relied on his Corsican levies to defend that island against Murat's attacks; and he did not rely in vain. Though confronted by a French Corsican regiment, they remained true to their salt, even during a truce, when they could recognize their compatriots. The partisan instinct was proof against the promises of Murat's envoys and the shouts even of kith and kin.

type Napoleon was to be the supreme exemplar; and the fates granted him as an arena a chaotic France and a distracted Europe.

Amidst that grim Corsican existence the Buonapartes passed their lives during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Occupied as advocates and lawyers with such details of the law as were of any practical importance, they must have been involved in family feuds and the oft-recurring disputes between Corsica and the suzerain Power, Genoa. As became dignitaries in the municipality of Ajaccio, several of the Buonapartes espoused the Genoese side; and the Genoese Senate in a document of the year 1652 styled one of them, Jérome, "Egregius Hieronimus di Buonaparte, procurator Nobilium." These distinctions they seem to have little coveted. Very few families belonged to the Corsican *noblesse*, and their fiefs were unimportant. In Corsica, as in the Forest Cantons of Switzerland and the Highlands of Scotland, class distinctions were by no means so coveted as in lands that had been thoroughly feudalized; and the Buonapartes, content with their civic dignities at Ajaccio and the attachment of their partisans on their country estates, seem rarely to have used the prefix which implied nobility. Their life was not unlike that of many an old Scottish laird, who, though possibly *bourgeois* in origin, yet by courtesy ranked as chieftain among his tenants, and was ennobled by the parlance of the countryside, perhaps all the more readily because he refused to wear the honours that came from over the Border.

But a new influence was now to call forth all the powers of this tough stock. In the middle of the eighteenth century we find the head of the family, Charles Marie Buonaparte, aglow with the flame of Corsican patriotism then being kindled by the noble career of Paoli. This gifted patriot, the champion of the islanders, first against the Genoese and later against the French, desired to cement by education the framework of the Corsican Commonwealth and founded a university. It

was here that the father of the future French Emperor received a training in law, and a mental stimulus which was to lift his family above the level of the *caporali* and attorneys with whom its lot had for centuries been cast. His ambition is seen in the endeavour, successfully carried out by his uncle, Lucien, Archdeacon of Ajaccio, to obtain recognition of kinship with the Buonapartes of Tuscany who had been ennobled by the Grand Duke. His patriotism is evinced in his ardent support of Paoli, by whose valour and energy the Genoese were finally driven from the island. Amidst these patriotic triumphs Charles confronted his destiny in the person of Letizia Ramolino, a beautiful girl, descended from an honourable Florentine family which had for centuries been settled in Corsica. The wedding took place in 1764, the bridegroom being then eighteen, and the bride fifteen years of age. The union, if rashly undertaken in the midst of civil strifes, was yet well assorted. Both parties to it were of patrician, if not definitely noble descent, and came of families which combined the intellectual gifts of Tuscany with the vigour of their later island home.[1] From her mother's race, the Pietra Santa family, Letizia imbibed the habits of the most backward and savage part of Corsica, where vendettas were rife and education was almost unknown. Left in ignorance in her early days, she yet was accustomed to hardships, and often showed the fertility of resource which such a life always develops. Hence, at the time of her marriage, she possessed a firmness of will far beyond her years; and her strength and fortitude enabled her to survive the terrible adversities of her early days, as also to meet with quiet matronly dignity the extraordinary honours showered on her as the mother of the French

[1] The facts as to the family of Napoleon's mother are given in full detail by M. Masson in his "Napoléon Inconnu," ch. i. They correct the statement often made as to her "lowly," "peasant" origin. Masson also proves that the house at Ajaccio, which is shown as Napoleon's birthplace, is of later construction, though on the same site.

MADAME BUONAPARTE (NAPOLEON'S MOTHER)

From the picture in the Town Hall, Ajaccio.

Emperor. She was inured to habits of frugality, which reappeared in the personal tastes of her son. In fact, she so far retained her old parsimonious habits, even amidst the splendours of the French Imperial Court, as to expose herself to the charge of avarice. But there is a touching side to all this. She seems ever to have felt that after the splendour there would come again the old days of adversity, and her instincts were in one sense correct. She lived on to the advanced age of eighty-six, and died twenty-one years after the break-up of her son's empire—a striking proof of the vitality and tenacity of her powers.

A kindly Providence veiled the future from the young couple. Troubles fell swiftly upon them both in private and in public life. Their first two children died in infancy. The third, Joseph, was born in 1768, when the Corsican patriots were making their last successful efforts against their new French oppressors: the fourth, the famous Napoleon, saw the light on August 15th, 1769, when the liberties of Corsica were being finally extinguished. Nine other children were born before the outbreak of the French Revolution reawakened civil strifes, amidst which the then fatherless family was tossed to and fro and finally whirled away to France.

Destiny had already linked the fortunes of the young Napoleon Buonaparte with those of France. After the downfall of Genoese rule in Corsica, France had taken over, for empty promises, the claims of the hard-pressed Italian republic to its troublesome island possession. It was a cheap and practical way of restoring, at least in the Mediterranean the shattered prestige of the French Bourbons. They had previously intervened in Corsican affairs on the side of the Genoese. Yet in 1764 Paoli appealed to Louis XV. for protection. It was granted, in the form of troops that proceeded quietly to occupy the coast towns of the island under cover of friendly assurances. In 1768, before the expiration of an informal truce, Marbeuf, the French commander, com-

menced hostilities against the patriots.[1] In vain did Rousseau and many other champions of popular liberty protest against this bartering away of insular freedom: in vain did Paoli rouse his compatriots to another and more unequal struggle, and seek to hold the mountainous interior. Poor, badly equipped, rent by family feuds and clan schisms, his followers were no match for the French troops; and after the utter break-up of his forces Paoli fled to England, taking with him three hundred and forty of the most determined patriots. With these irreconcilables Charles Buonaparte did not cast in his lot, but accepted the pardon offered to those who should recognize the French sway. With his wife and their little child Joseph he returned to Ajaccio; and there, shortly afterwards, Napoleon was born. As the patriotic historian, Jacobi, has finely said, "The Corsican people, when exhausted by producing martyrs to the cause of liberty, produced Napoleon Buonaparte."[2]

Seeing that Charles Buonaparte had been an ardent adherent of Paoli, his sudden change of front has exposed him to keen censure. He certainly had not the grit of which heroes are made. His seems to have been an ill-balanced nature, soon buoyed up by enthusiasms,

[1] See Jacobi, "Hist. de la Corse," vol. ii., ch. viii. The whole story is told with prudent brevity by French historians, even by Masson and Chuquet. The few words in which Thiers dismisses this subject are altogether misleading.

[2] Much has been written to prove that Napoleon was born in 1768, and was really the eldest surviving son. The reasons, stated briefly, are: (1) that the first baptismal name of Joseph Buonaparte was merely *Nabulione* (Italian for *Napoleon*), and that *Joseph* was a later addition to his name on the baptismal register of January 7th, 1768, at Corte; (2) certain statements that Joseph was born at Ajaccio; (3) Napoleon's own statement at his marriage that he was born in 1768. To this it may be replied that: (*a*) other letters and statements, still more decisive, prove that Joseph was born at Corte in 1768 and Napoleon at Ajaccio in 1769; (*b*) Napoleon's entry in the marriage register was obviously designed to lessen the disparity of years of his bride, who, on her side, subtracted four years from her age. See Chuquet, "La Jeunesse de Napoléon," p. 65.

and as speedily depressed by their evaporation ; endowed with enough of learning and culture to be a Voltairean and write second-rate verses ; and with a talent for intrigue which sufficed to embarrass his never very affluent fortunes. Napoleon certainly derived no world-compelling qualities from his father : for these he was indebted to the wilder strain which ran in his mother's blood. The father doubtless saw in the French connection a chance of worldly advancement and of liberation from pecuniary difficulties ; for the new rulers now sought to gain over the patrician families of the island. Many of them had resented the dictatorship of Paoli ; and they now gladly accepted the connection with France, which promised to enrich their country and to open up a brilliant career in the French army, where commissions were limited to the scions of nobility.

Much may be said in excuse of Charles Buonaparte's decision, and no one can deny that Corsica has ultimately gained much by her connection with France. But his change of front was open to the charge that it was prompted by self-interest rather than by philosophic foresight. At any rate, his second son throughout his boyhood nursed a deep resentment against his father for his desertion of the patriots' cause. The youth's sympathies were with the peasants, whose allegiance was not to be bought by baubles, whose constancy and bravery long held out against the French in a hopeless guerilla warfare. His hot Corsican blood boiled at the stories of oppression and insult which he heard from his humbler compatriots. When, at eleven years of age, he saw in the military college at Brienne the portrait of Choiseul, the French Minister who had urged on the conquest of Corsica, his passion burst forth in a torrent of imprecations against the traitor ; and, even after the death of his father in 1785, he exclaimed that he could never forgive him for not following Paoli into exile.

What trifles seem, at times, to alter the current of human affairs ! Had his father acted thus, the young Napoleon would in all probability have entered the

military or naval service of Great Britain; he might have shared Paoli's enthusiasm for the land of his adoption, and have followed the Corsican hero in his enterprises against the French Revolution, thenceforth figuring in history merely as a greater Marlborough, crushing the military efforts of democratic France, and luring England into a career of Continental conquest. Monarchy and aristocracy would have gone unchallenged, except within the "natural limits" of France; and the other nations, never shaken to their inmost depths, would have dragged on their old inert fragmentary existence.

The decision of Charles Buonaparte altered the destiny of Europe. He determined that his eldest boy, Joseph, should enter the Church, and that Napoleon should be a soldier. His perception of the characters of his boys was correct. An anecdote, for which the elder brother is responsible, throws a flood of light on their temperaments. The master of their school arranged a mimic combat for his pupils—Romans against Carthaginians. Joseph, as the elder was ranged under the banner of Rome, while Napoleon was told off among the Carthaginians; but, piqued at being chosen for the losing side, the child fretted, begged, and stormed until the less bellicose Joseph agreed to change places with his exacting junior. The incident is prophetic of much in the later history of the family.

Its imperial future was opened up by the deft complaisance now shown by Charles Buonaparte. The reward for his speedy submission to France was soon forthcoming. The French commander in Corsica used his influence to secure the admission of the young Napoleon to the military school of Brienne in Champagne; and as the father was able to satisfy the authorities not only that he was without fortune, but also that his family had been noble for four generations, Napoleon was admitted to this school to be educated at the charges of the King of France (April, 1779). He was now, at the tender age of nine, a stranger in a strange land, among a people whom he detested as the oppressors of his country-

men. Worst of all, he had to endure the taunt of belonging to a subject race. What a position for a proud and exacting child! Little wonder that the official report represented him as silent and obstinate; but, strange to say, it added the word "imperious." It was a tough character which could defy repression amidst such surroundings. As to his studies, little need be said. In his French history he read of the glories of the distant past (when "Germany was part of the French Empire"), the splendours of the reign of Louis XIV., the disasters of France in the Seven Years' War, and the "prodigious conquests of the English in India." But his imagination was kindled from other sources. Boys of pronounced character have always owed far more to their private reading than to their set studies; and the young Buonaparte, while grudgingly learning Latin and French grammar, was feeding his mind on Plutarch's "Lives"—in a French translation. The artful intermingling of the actual and the romantic, the historic and the personal, in those vivid sketches of ancient worthies and heroes, has endeared them to many minds. Rousseau derived unceasing profit from their perusal; and Madame Roland found in them "the pasture of great souls." It was so with the lonely Corsican youth. Holding aloof from his comrades in gloomy isolation, he caught in the exploits of Greeks and Romans a distant echo of the tragic romance of his beloved island home. The librarian of the school asserted that even then the young soldier had modelled his future career on that of the heroes of antiquity; and we may well believe that, in reading of the exploits of Leonidas, Curtius, and Cincinnatus, he saw the figure of his own antique republican hero, Paoli. To fight side by side with Paoli against the French was his constant dream. "Paoli will return," he once exclaimed, "and as soon as I have strength, I will go to help him: and perhaps together we shall be able to shake the odious yoke from off the neck of Corsica."

But there was another work which exercised a great influence on his young mind—the "Gallic War" of

Cæsar. To the young Italian the conquest of Gaul by a man of his own race must have been a congenial topic, and in Cæsar himself the future conqueror may dimly have recognized a kindred spirit. The masterful energy and all-conquering will of the old Roman, his keen insight into the heart of a problem, the wide sweep of his mental vision, ranging over the intrigues of the Roman Senate, the shifting politics of a score of tribes, and the myriad administrative details of a great army and a mighty province—these were the qualities that furnished the chief mental training to the young cadet. Indeed, the career of Cæsar was destined to exert a singular fascination over the Napoleonic dynasty, not only on its founder, but also on Napoleon III.; and the change in the character and career of Napoleon the Great may be registered mentally in the effacement of the portraits of Leonidas and Paoli by those of Cæsar and Alexander. Later on, during his sojourn at Ajaccio in 1790, when the first shadows were flitting across his hitherto unclouded love for Paoli, we hear that he spent whole nights poring over Cæsar's history, committing many passages to memory in his passionate admiration of those wondrous exploits. Eagerly he took Cæsar's side as against Pompey, and no less warmly defended him from the charge of plotting against the liberties of the commonwealth.[1] It was a perilous study for a republican youth in whom the military instincts were as ingrained as the genius for rule.

Concerning the young Buonaparte's life at Brienne there exist few authentic records and many questionable anecdotes. Of these last, that which is the most credible and suggestive relates his proposal to his schoolfellows to construct ramparts of snow during the sharp winter of 1783-4. According to his schoolfellow, Bourrienne, these mimic fortifications were planned by Buonaparte, who also directed the methods of attack and defence: or, as others say, he reconstructed the walls according to the needs of modern war. In either case, the incident

[1] Nasica, "Mémoires," p. 192.

bespeaks for him great power of organization and control. But there were in general few outlets for his originality and vigour. He seems to have disliked all his comrades, except Bourrienne, as much as they detested him for his moody humours and fierce outbreaks of temper. He is even reported to have vowed that he would do as much harm as possible to the French people; but the remark smacks of the story-book. Equally doubtful are the two letters in which he prays to be removed from the indignities to which he was subjected at Brienne.[1] In other letters which are undoubtedly genuine, he refers to his future career with ardour, and writes not a word as to the bullying to which his Corsican zeal subjected him. Particularly noteworthy is the letter to his uncle begging him to intervene so as to prevent Joseph Buonaparte from taking up a military career. Joseph, writes the younger brother, would make a good garrison officer, as he was well formed and clever at frivolous compliments—"good therefore for society, but for a fight——?"

Napoleon's determination had been noticed by his teachers. They had failed to bend his will, at least on important points. In lesser details his Italian adroitness seems to have been of service; for the officer who inspected the school reported of him: "Constitution, health excellent: character submissive, sweet, honest, grateful: conduct very regular: has always distinguished himself by his application to mathematics: knows history and geography passably: very weak in accomplishments. He will be an excellent seaman: is worthy to enter the School at Paris." To the military school at Paris he was accordingly sent in due course, entering there in October, 1784. The change from the semi-monastic life at Brienne to the splendid edifice which fronts the Champ de Mars had less effect than might

[1] Both letters are accepted as authentic by Jung, "Bonaparte et son Temps," vol. i., pp. 84, 92; but Masson, "Napoléon Inconnu," vol. i., p. 55, tracking them to their source, discredits them, as also from internal evidence.

have been expected in a youth of fifteen years. Not yet did he become French in sympathy. His love of Corsica and hatred of the French monarchy steeled him against the luxuries of his new surroundings. Perhaps it was an added sting that he was educated at the expense of the monarchy which had conquered his kith and kin. He nevertheless applied himself with energy to his favourite studies, especially mathematics. Defective in languages he still was, and ever remained; for his critical acumen in literature ever fastened on the matter rather than on style. To the end of his days he could never write Italian, much less French, with accuracy; and his tutor at Paris not inaptly described his boyish composition as resembling molten granite. The same qualities of directness and impetuosity were also fatal to his efforts at mastering the movements of the dance. In spite of lessons at Paris and private lessons which he afterwards took at Valence, he was never a dancer: his bent was obviously for the exact sciences rather than the arts, for the geometrical rather than the rhythmical: he thought, as he moved, in straight lines, never in curves.

The death of his father during the year which the youth spent at Paris sharpened his sense of responsibility towards his seven younger brothers and sisters. His own poverty must have inspired him with disgust at the luxury which he saw around him; but there are good reasons for doubting the genuineness of the memorial which he is alleged to have sent from Paris to the second master at Brienne on this subject. The letters of the scholars at Paris were subject to strict surveillance; and, if he had taken the trouble to draw up a list of criticisms on his present training, most assuredly it would have been destroyed. Undoubtedly, however, he would have sympathized with the unknown critic in his complaint of the unsuitableness of sumptuous meals to youths who were destined for the hardships of the camp. At Brienne he had been dubbed "the Spartan," an instance of that almost uncanny faculty of schoolboys

to dash off in a nickname the salient features of character. The phrase was correct, almost for Napoleon's whole life. At any rate, the pomp of Paris served but to root his youthful affections more tenaciously in the rocks of Corsica.

In September, 1785, that is, at the age of sixteen, Buonaparte was nominated for a commision as junior lieutenant in La Fère regiment of artillery quartered at Valence on the Rhone. This was his first close contact with real life. The rules of the service required him to spend three months of rigorous drill before he was admitted to his commission. The work was exacting: the pay was small, viz., 1,120 francs, or less than £45, a year; but all reports agree as to his keen zest for his profession and the recognition of his transcendent abilities by his superior officers.[1] There it was that he mastered the rudiments of war, for lack of which many generals of noble birth have quickly closed in disaster careers that began with promise: there, too, he learnt that hardest and best of all lessons, prompt obedience. "To learn obeying is the fundamental art of governing," says Carlyle. It was so with Napoleon: at Valence he served his apprenticeship in the art of conquering and the art of governing.

This spring-time of his life is of interest and importance in many ways: it reveals many amiable qualities, which had hitherto been blighted by the real or fancied scorn of the wealthy cadets. At Valence, while shrinking from his brother officers, he sought society more congenial to his simple tastes and restrained demeanour. In a few of the best bourgeois families of Valence he found happiness. There, too, blossomed the tenderest, purest idyll of his life. At the country house of a cultured lady who had befriended him in his solitude, he saw his first love, Caroline de Colombier. It was a passing fancy; but to her all the passion of his southern nature welled forth. She seems

[1] Chaptal, "Mes Souvenirs sur Napoléon," p. 177.

to have returned his love; for in the stormy sunset of his life at St. Helena he recalled some delicious walks at dawn when Caroline and he had—eaten cherries together. One lingers fondly over these scenes of his otherwise stern career, for they reveal his capacity for social joys and for deep and tender affection, had his lot been otherwise cast. How different might have been his life, had France never conquered Corsica, and had the Revolution never burst forth! But Corsica was still his dominant passion. When he was called away from Valence to repress a riot at Lyons, his feelings, distracted for a time by Caroline, swerved back towards his island home; and in September, 1786, he had the joy of revisiting the scenes of his childhood. Warmly though he greeted his mother, brothers and sisters, after an absence of nearly eight years, his chief delight was in the rocky shores, the verdant dales and mountain heights of Corsica. The odour of the forests, the setting of the sun in the sea "as in the bosom of the infinite," the quiet proud independence of the mountaineers themselves, all enchanted him. His delight reveals almost Wertherian powers of "sensibility." Even the family troubles could not damp his ardour. His father had embarked on questionable speculations, which now threatened the Buonapartes with bankruptcy, unless the French Government proved to be complacent and generous. With the hope of pressing one of the family claims on the royal exchequer, the second son procured an extension of furlough and sped to Paris. There at the close of 1787 he spent several weeks, hopefully endeavouring to extract money from the bankrupt Government. It was a season of disillusionment in more senses than one; for there he saw for himself the seamy side of Parisian life, and drifted for a brief space about the giddy vortex of the Palais Royal. What a contrast to the limpid life of Corsica was that turbid frothy existence—already swirling towards its mighty plunge!

After a furlough of twenty-one months he rejoined his regiment, now at Auxonne. There his health suffered

considerably, not only from the miasma of the marshes of the river Saône, but also from family anxieties and arduous literary toils. To these last it is now needful to refer. Indeed, the external events of his early life are of value only as they reveal the many-sidedness of his nature and the growth of his mental powers.

How came he to outgrow the insular patriotism of his early years? The foregoing recital of facts must have already suggested one obvious explanation. Nature had dowered him so prodigally with diverse gifts, mainly of an imperious order, that he could scarcely have limited his sphere of action to Corsica. Profoundly as he loved his island, it offered no sphere commensurate with his varied powers and masterful will. It was no empty vaunt which his father had uttered on his deathbed that his Napoleon would one day overthrow the old monarchies and conquer Europe.[1] Neither did the great commander himself overstate the peculiarity of his temperament, when he confessed that his instincts had ever prompted him that his will must prevail, and that what pleased him must of necessity belong to him. Most spoilt children harbour the same illusion, for a brief space. But all the buffetings of fortune failed to drive it from the young Buonaparte; and when despair as to his future might have impaired the vigour of his domineering instincts, his mind and will acquired a fresh rigidity by coming under the spell of that philosophizing doctrinaire, Rousseau.

There was every reason why he should early be attracted by this fantastic thinker. In that notable work, "Le Contrat Social" (1762), Rousseau called attention to the antique energy shown by the Corsicans in defence of their liberties, and in a startlingly prophetic phrase he exclaimed that the little island would one day astonish Europe. The source of this predilection of Rousseau for Corsica is patent. Born and reared at Geneva, he felt a Switzer's love for a people which was

[1] Joseph Buonaparte, "Mems.," vol. i., p. 29. So too Miot de Melito, "Mems.," vol. i., ch. x.

"neither rich nor poor but self-sufficing"; and in the simple life and fierce love of liberty of the hardy islanders he saw traces of that social contract which he postulated as the basis of society. According to him, the beginnings of all social and political institutions are to be found in some agreement or contract between men. Thus arise the clan, the tribe, the nation. The nation may delegate many of its powers to a ruler; but if he abuse such powers, the contract between him and his people is at an end, and they may return to the primitive state, which is founded on an agreement of equals with equals. Herein lay the attractiveness of Rousseau for all who were discontented with their surroundings. He seemed infallibly to demonstrate the absurdity of tyranny and the need of returning to the primitive bliss of the social contract. It mattered not that the said contract was utterly unhistorical and that his argument teemed with fallacies. He inspired a whole generation with detestation of the present and with longings for the golden age. Poets had sung of it, but Rousseau seemed to bring it within the grasp of long-suffering mortals.

The first extant manuscript of Napoleon, written at Valence in April, 1786, shows that he sought in Rousseau's armoury the logical weapons for demonstrating the "right" of the Corsicans to rebel against the French. The young hero-worshipper begins by noting that it is the birthday of Paoli. He plunges into a panegyric on the Corsican patriots, when he is arrested by the thought that many censure them for rebelling at all. "The divine laws forbid revolt. But what have divine laws to do with a purely human affair? Just think of the absurdity—divine laws universally forbidding the casting off of a usurping yoke! . . . As for human laws, there cannot be any after the prince violates them." He then postulates two origins for government as alone possible. Either the people has established laws and submitted itself to the prince, or the prince has established laws. In the first case, the prince is engaged by the very nature of his office to execute the covenants. In the second

case, the laws tend, or do not tend, to the welfare of the people, which is the aim of all government: if they do not, the contract with the prince dissolves of itself, for the people then enters again into its primitive state. Having thus proved the sovereignty of the people, Buonaparte uses his doctrine to justify Corsican revolt against France, and thus concludes his curious medley: "The Corsicans, following all the laws of justice, have been able to shake off the yoke of the Genoese, and may do the same with that of the French. Amen."

Five days later he again gives the reins to his melancholy. "Always alone, though in the midst of men," he faces the thought of suicide. With an innate power of summarizing and balancing thoughts and sensations, he draws up arguments for and against this act. He is in the dawn of his days and in four months' time he will see "la patrie," which he has not seen since childhood. What joy! And yet—how men have fallen away from nature: how cringing are his compatriots to their conquerors: they are no longer the enemies of tyrants, of luxury, of vile courtiers: the French have corrupted their morals, and when "la patrie" no longer survives, a good patriot ought to die. Life among the French is odious: their modes of life differ from his as much as the light of the moon differs from that of the sun.—A strange effusion this for a youth of seventeen living amidst the full glories of the spring in Dauphiné. It was only a few weeks before the ripening of cherries. Did that cherry-idyll with Mdlle. de Colombier lure him back to life? Or did the hope of striking a blow for Corsica stay his suicidal hand? Probably the latter; for we find him shortly afterwards tilting against a Protestant minister of Geneva who had ventured to criticise one of the dogmas of Rousseau's evangel.

The Genevan philosopher had asserted that Christianity, by enthroning in the hearts of Christians the idea of a Kingdom not of this world, broke the unity of civil society, because it detached the hearts of its converts from the State, as from all earthly things. To this the

Genevan minister had successfully replied by quoting Christian teachings on the subject at issue. But Buonaparte fiercely accuses the pastor of neither having understood, nor even read, "Le Contrat Social": he hurls at his opponent texts of Scripture which enjoin obedience to the laws: he accuses Christianity of rendering men slaves to an anti-social tyranny, because its priests set up an authority in opposition to civil laws; and as for Protestantism, it propagated discords between its followers, and thereby violated civic unity. Christianity, he argues, is a foe to civil government, for it aims at making men happy in this life by inspiring them with hope of a future life; while the aim of civil government is "to lend assistance to the feeble against the strong, and by this means to allow everyone to enjoy a sweet tranquillity, the road of happiness." He therefore concludes that Christianity and civil government are diametrically opposed.

In this tirade we see the youth's spirit of revolt flinging him not only against French law, but against the religion which sanctions it. He sees none of the beauty of the Gospels which Rousseau had admitted. His views are more rigid than those of his teacher. Scarcely can he conceive of two influences, the spiritual and the governmental, working on parallel lines, on different parts of man's nature. His conception of human society is that of an indivisible, indistinguishable whole, wherein materialism, tinged now and again by religious sentiment and personal honour, is the sole noteworthy influence. He finds no worth in a religion which seeks to work from within to without, which aims at transforming character, and thus transforming the world. In its headlong quest of tangible results his eager spirit scorns so tardy a method: he will "compel men to be happy," and for this result there is but one practicable means, the Social Contract, the State. Everything which mars the unity of the Social Contract shall be shattered, so that the State may have a clear field for the exercise of its beneficent despotism. Such is Buonaparte's political and religious creed at the age of seventeen, and such it re-

mained (with many reservations suggested by maturer thought and self-interest) to the end of his days. It reappears in his policy anent the Concordat of 1802, by which religion was reduced to the level of handmaid to the State, as also in his frequent assertions that he would never have quite the same power as the Czar and the Sultan, because he had not undivided sway over the consciences of his people.[1] In this boyish essay we may perhaps discern the fundamental reason of his later failures. He never completely understood religion, or the enthusiasm which it can evoke; neither did he ever fully realize the complexity of human nature, the many-sidedness of social life, and the limitations that beset the action even of the most intelligent law-maker.[2]

His reading of Rousseau having equipped him for the

[1] Chaptal, "Souvenirs sur Napoléon," p. 237. See too Masson, "Napoléon Inconnu," vol. i., p. 158, note.

[2] In an after-dinner conversation on January 11th, 1803, with Roederer, Buonaparte exalted Voltaire at the expense of Rousseau in these significant words: "The more I read Voltaire, the more I like him: he is always reasonable, never a charlatan, never a fanatic: he is made for mature minds. Up to sixteen years of age I would have fought for Rousseau against all the friends of Voltaire. Now it is the contrary. *I have been especially disgusted with Rousseau since I have seen the East. Savage man is a dog.*" ("Œuvres de Roederer," vol. iii., p. 461.)

In 1804 he even denied his indebtedness to Rousseau. During a family discussion, wherein he also belittled Corsica, he called Rousseau "a babbler, or, if you prefer it, an eloquent enough *idéalogue*. I never liked him, nor indeed well understood him: truly I had not the courage to read him all, because I thought him for the most part tedious." (Lucien Buonaparte, "Mémoires," vol. ii., ch. xi.)

His later views on Rousseau are strikingly set forth by Stanislas Girardin, who, in his "Memoirs," relates that Buonaparte, on his visit to the tomb of Rousseau, said: "'It would have been better for the repose of France that this man had never been born.' 'Why, First Consul?' said I. 'He prepared the French Revolution.' 'I thought it was not for you to complain of the Revolution.' 'Well,' he replied, 'the future will show whether it would not have been better for the repose of the world that neither I nor Rousseau had existed.'" Méneval confirms this remarkable statement.

study of human society and government, he now, during his first sojourn at Auxonne (June, 1788—September, 1789), proceeds to ransack the records of the ancient and modern world. Despite ill-health, family troubles, and the outbreak of the French Revolution, he grapples with this portentous task. The history, geography, religion, and social customs of the ancient Persians, Scythians, Thracians, Athenians, Spartans, Egyptians, and Carthaginians—all furnished materials for his encyclopædic note-books. Nothing came amiss to his summarizing genius. Here it was that he gained that knowledge of the past which was to astonish his contemporaries. Side by side with suggestions on regimental discipline and improvements in artillery, we find notes on the opening episodes of Plato's "Republic," and a systematic summary of English history from the earliest times down to the Revolution of 1688. This last event inspired him with special interest, because the Whigs and their philosophic champion, Locke, maintained that James II. had violated the original contract between prince and people. Everywhere in his notes Napoleon emphasizes the incidents which led to conflicts between dynasties or between rival principles. In fact, through all these voracious studies there appear signs of his determination to write a history of Corsica; and, while inspiriting his kinsmen by recalling the glorious past, he sought to weaken the French monarchy by inditing a "Dissertation sur l'Autorité Royale." His first sketch of this work runs as follows:

"23 October, 1788. Auxonne.

"This work will begin with general ideas as to the origin and the enhanced prestige of the name of king. Military rule is favourable to it: this work will afterwards enter into the details of the usurped authority enjoyed by the Kings of the twelve Kingdoms of Europe.

"There are very few Kings who have not deserved dethronement."[1]

This curt pronouncement is all that remains of the pro-

[1] Masson, "Napoléon Inconnu," vol. ii., p. 53.

jected work. It sufficiently indicates, however, the aim of Napoleon's studies. One and all they were designed to equip him for the great task of re-awakening the spirit of the Corsicans and of sapping the base of the French monarchy.

But these reams of manuscript notes and crude literary efforts have an even wider source of interest. They show how narrow was his outlook on life. It all turned on the regeneration of Corsica by methods which he himself prescribed. We are therefore able to understand why, when his own methods of salvation for Corsica were rejected, he tore himself away and threw his undivided energies into the Revolution.

Yet the records of his early life show that in his character there was a strain of true sentiment and affection. In him Nature carved out a character of rock-like firmness, but she adorned it with flowers of human sympathy and tendrils of family love. At his first parting from his brother Joseph at Autun, when the elder brother was weeping passionately, the little Napoleon dropped a tear: but that, said the tutor, meant as much as the flood of tears from Joseph. Love of his relatives was a potent factor of his policy in later life; and slander has never been able wholly to blacken the character of a man who loved and honoured his mother, who asserted that her advice had often been of the highest service to him, and that her justice and firmness of spirit marked her out as a natural ruler of men. But when these admissions are freely granted, it still remains true that his character was naturally hard; that his sense of personal superiority made him, even as a child, exacting and domineering; and the sequel was to show that even the strongest passion of his youth, his determination to free Corsica from France, could be abjured if occasion demanded, all the force of his nature being thenceforth concentrated on vaster adventures.

CHAPTER II

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION AND CORSICA

"THEY seek to destroy the Revolution by attacking my person: I will defend it, for I am the Revolution." Such were the words uttered by Buonaparte after the failure of the royalist plot of 1804. They are a daring transcript of Louis XIV.'s "L'état, c'est moi." That was a bold claim, even for an age attuned to the whims of autocrats: but this of the young Corsican is even more daring, for he thereby equated himself with a movement which claimed to be wide as humanity and infinite as truth. And yet when he spoke these words, they were not scouted as presumptuous folly: to most Frenchmen they seemed sober truth and practical good sense. How came it, one asks in wonder, that after the short space of fifteen years a world-wide movement depended on a single life, that the infinitudes of 1789 lived on only in the form, and by the pleasure, of the First Consul? Here surely is a political incarnation unparalleled in the whole course of human history. The riddle cannot be solved by history alone. It belongs in part to the domain of psychology, when that science shall undertake the study, not merely of man as a unit, but of the aspirations, moods, and whims of communities and nations. Meanwhile it will be our far humbler task to strive to point out the relation of Buonaparte to the Revolution, and to show how the mighty force of his will dragged it to earth.

The first questions that confront us are obviously these. Were the lofty aims and aspirations of the

Revolution attainable? And, if so, did the men of 1789 follow them by practical methods? To the former of these questions the present chapter will, in part at least, serve as an answer. On the latter part of the problem the events described in later chapters will throw some light: in them we shall see that the great popular upheaval let loose mighty forces that bore Buonaparte on to fortune.

Here we may notice that the Revolution was not a simple and therefore solid movement. It was complex and contained the seeds of discord which lurk in many-sided and militant creeds. The theories of its intellectual champions were as diverse as the motives which spurred on their followers to the attack on the outworn abuses of the age.

Discontent and faith were the ultimate motive powers of the Revolution. Faith prepared the Revolution and discontent accomplished it. Idealists who, in varied planes of thought, preached the doctrine of human perfectibility, succeeded in slowly permeating the dull toiling masses of France with hope. Omitting here any notice of philosophic speculation as such, we may briefly notice the teachings of three writers whose influence on revolutionary politics was to be definite and practical. These were Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Rousseau. The first was by no means a revolutionist, for he decided in favour of a mixed form of government, like that of England, which guaranteed the State against the dangers of autocracy, oligarchy, and mob-rule. Only by a ricochet did he assail the French monarchy. But he re-awakened critical inquiry; and any inquiry was certain to sap the base of the *ancien régime* in France. Montesquieu's teaching inspired the group of moderate reformers who in 1789 desired to re-fashion the institutions of France on the model of those of England. But popular sentiment speedily swept past these Anglophils towards the more attractive aims set forth by Voltaire.

This keen thinker subjected the privileged classes, especially the titled clergy, to a searching fire of philo-

sophic bombs and barbed witticisms. Never was there a more dazzling succession of literary triumphs over a tottering system. The satirized classes winced and laughed, and the intellect of France was conquered, for the Revolution. Thenceforth it was impossible that peasants who were nominally free should toil to satisfy the exacting needs of the State, and to support the brilliant bevy of nobles who flitted gaily round the monarch at Versailles. The young King Louis XVI., it is true, carried through several reforms, but he had not enough strength of will to abolish the absurd immunities from taxation which freed the nobles and titled clergy from the burdens of the State. Thus, down to 1789, the middle classes and peasants bore nearly all the weight of taxation, while the peasants were also encumbered by feudal dues and tolls. These were the crying grievances which united in a solid phalanx both thinkers and practical men, and thereby gave an immense impetus to the levelling doctrines of Rousseau.

Two only of his political teachings concern us here, namely, social equality and the unquestioned supremacy of the State; for to these dogmas, when they seemed doomed to political bankruptcy, Napoleon Buonaparte was to act as residuary legatee. According to Rousseau, society and government originated in a social contract, whereby all members of the community have equal rights. It matters not that the spirit of the contract may have evaporated amidst the miasma of luxury. That is a violation of civil society; and members are justified in reverting at once to the primitive ideal. If the existence of the body politic be endangered, force may be used: "Whoever refuses to obey the general will shall be constrained to do so by the whole body; which means nothing else than that he shall be forced to be free." Equally plausible and dangerous was his teaching as to the indivisibility of the general will. Deriving every public power from his social contract, he finds it easy to prove that the sovereign power,

vested in all the citizens, must be incorruptible, inalienable, unrepresentable, indivisible, and indestructible. Englishmen may now find it difficult to understand the enthusiasm called forth by this quintessence of negations; but to Frenchman recently escaped from the age of privilege and warring against the coalition of kings, the cry of the Republic one and indivisible was a trumpet call to death or victory. Any shifts, even that of a dictatorship, were to be borne, provided that social equality could be saved. As republican Rome had saved her early liberties by intrusting unlimited powers to a temporary dictator, so, claimed Rousseau, a young commonwealth must by a similar device consult Nature's first law of self-preservation. The dictator saves liberty by temporarily abrogating it: by momentary gagging of the legislative power he renders it truly vocal.

The events of the French Revolution form a tragic commentary on these theories. In the first stage of that great movement we see the followers of Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Rousseau marching in an undivided host against the ramparts of privilege. The walls of the Bastille fall down even at the blast of their trumpets. Odious feudal privileges disappear in a single sitting of the National Assembly; and the *Parlements*, or supreme law courts of the provinces, are swept away. The old provinces themselves are abolished, and at the beginning of 1790 France gains social and political unity by her new system of Departments, which grants full freedom of action in local affairs, though in all national concerns it binds France closely to the new popular government at Paris. But discords soon begin to divide the reformers: hatred of clerical privilege and the desire to fill the empty coffers of the State dictate the first acts of spoliation. Tithes are abolished: the lands of the Church are confiscated to the service of the State; monastic orders are suppressed; and the Government undertakes to pay the stipends of bishops and priests. Furthermore, their subjection to the State is definitely secured by the Civil Constitution of the Clergy (July,

1790), which invalidates their allegiance to the Pope. Most of the clergy refuse: these are termed non-jurors or orthodox priests, while their more complaisant colleagues are known as constitutional priests. Hence arises a serious schism in the Church, which distracts the religious life of the land, and separates the friends of liberty from the champions of the rigorous equality preached by Rousseau.

The new constitution of 1791 was also a source of discord. In its jealousy of the royal authority, the National Assembly seized very many of the executive functions of government. The results were disastrous. Laws remained without force, taxes went uncollected, the army was distracted by mutinies, and the monarchy sank slowly into the gulf of bankruptcy and anarchy. Thus, in the course of three years, the revolutionists goaded the clergy to desperation, they were about to overthrow the monarchy, every month was proving their local self-government to be unworkable, and they themselves split into factions that plunged France into war and drenched her soil by organized massacres.

We know very little about the impression made on the young Buonaparte by the first events of the Revolution. His note-book seems even to show that he regarded them as an inconvenient interference with his plans for Corsica. But gradually the Revolution excites his interest. In September, 1789, we find him on furlough in Corsica sharing the hopes of the islanders that their representatives in the French National Assembly will obtain the boon of independence. He exhorts his compatriots to favour the democratic cause, which promises a speedy deliverance from official abuses. He urges them to don the new tricolour cockade, symbol of Parisian triumph over the old monarchy; to form a club; above all, to organize a National Guard. The young officer knew that military power was passing from the royal army, now honeycombed with discontent, to the National Guard. Here surely was Corsica's means of

salvation. But the French governor of Corsica intervenes. The club is closed, and the National Guard is dispersed. Thereupon Buonaparte launches a vigorous protest against the tyranny of the governor and appeals to the National Assembly of France for some guarantee of civil liberty. His name is at the head of this petition, a sufficiently daring step for a junior lieutenant on furlough. But his patriotism and audacity carry him still further. He journeys to Bastia, the official capital of his island, and is concerned in an affray between the populace and the royal troops (November 5th, 1789). The French authorities, fortunately for him, are nearly powerless: he is merely requested to return to Ajaccio; and there he organizes anew the civic force, and sets the dissident islanders an example of good discipline by mounting guard outside the house of a personal opponent.

Other events now transpired which began to assuage his opposition to France. Thanks to the eloquent efforts of Mirabeau, the Corsican patriots who had remained in exile since 1768 were allowed to return and enjoy the full rights of citizenship. Little could the friends of liberty at Paris, or even the statesman himself, have foreseen all the consequences of this action: it softened the feelings of many Corsicans towards their conquerors; above all, it caused the heart of Napoleon Buonaparte for the first time to throb in accord with that of the French nation. His feelings towards Paoli also began to cool. The conduct of this illustrious exile exposed him to the charge of ingratitude towards France. The decree of the French National Assembly, which restored him to Corsican citizenship, was graced by acts of courtesy such as the generous French nature can so winningly dispense. Louis XVI. and the National Assembly warmly greeted him, and recognized him as head of the National Guard of the island. Yet, amidst all the congratulations, Paoli saw the approach of anarchy, and behaved with some reserve. Outwardly, however, concord seemed to be assured, when on July 14th, 1790, he landed in Corsica; but the hatred long

nursed by the mountaineers and fisherfolk against France was not to be exorcised by a few demonstrations. In truth, the island was deeply agitated. The priests were rousing the people against the newly decreed Civil Constitution of the Clergy; and one of these disturbances endangered the life of Napoleon himself. He and his brother Joseph chanced to pass by when one of the processions of priests and devotees was exciting the pity and indignation of the townsfolk. The two brothers, who were now well known as partisans of the Revolution, were threatened with violence, and were saved only by their own firm demeanour and the intervention of peacemakers.

Then again, the concession of local self-government to the island, as one of the Departments of France, revealed unexpected difficulties. Bastia and Ajaccio struggled hard for the honour of being the official capital. Paoli favoured the claims of Bastia, thereby annoying the champions of Ajaccio, among whom the Buonapartes were prominent. The schism was widened by the dictatorial tone of Paoli, a demeanour which ill became the chief of a civic force. In fact, it soon became apparent that Corsica was too small a sphere for natures so able and masterful as those of Paoli and Napoleon Buonaparte.

The first meeting of these two men must have been a scene of deep interest. It was on the fatal field of Ponte Nuovo. Napoleon doubtless came there in the spirit of true hero-worship. But hero-worship which can stand the strain of actual converse is rare indeed, especially when the expectant devotee is endowed with keen insight and habits of trenchant expression. One phrase has come down to us as a result of the interview; but this phrase contains a volume of meaning. After Paoli had explained the disposition of his troops against the French at Ponte Nuovo, Buonaparte drily remarked to his brother Joseph, "The result of these dispositions was what was inevitable."[1]

[1] Joseph Buonaparte, "Mémoires," vol. i., p. 44.

For the present, Buonaparte and other Corsican democrats were closely concerned with the delinquencies of the Comte de Buttafuoco, the deputy for the twelve nobles of the island to the National Assembly of France. In a letter written on January 23rd, 1791, Buonaparte overwhelms this man with a torrent of invective.—He it was who had betrayed his country to France in 1768. Self-interest and that alone prompted his action then, and always. French rule was a cloak for his design of subjecting Corsica to "the absurd feudal *régime*" of the barons. In his selfish royalism he had protested against the new French constitution as being unsuited to Corsica, "though it was exactly the same as that which brought us so much good and was wrested from us only amidst streams of blood."—The letter is remarkable for the southern intensity of its passion, and for a certain hardening of tone towards Paoli. Buonaparte writes of Paoli as having been ever "surrounded by enthusiasts, and as failing to understand in a man any other passion than fanaticism for liberty and independence," and as duped by Buttafuoco in 1768.[1] The phrase has an obvious reference to the Paoli of 1791, surrounded by men who had shared his long exile and regarded the English constitution as their model. Buonaparte, on the contrary, is the accredited champion of French democracy, his furious epistle being printed by the Jacobin Club of Ajaccio.

[1] M. Chuquet, in his work "La Jeunesse de Napoléon" (Paris, 1898), gives a different opinion : but I think this passage shows a veiled hostility to Paoli. Probably we may refer to this time an incident stated by Napoleon at St. Helena to Lady Malcolm ("Diary," p. 88), namely, that Paoli urged on him the acceptance of a commission in the British army : "But I preferred the French, because I spoke the language, was of their religion, understood and liked their manners, and I thought the Revolution a fine time for an enterprising young man. Paoli was angry—we did not speak afterwards." It is hard to reconcile all these statements.

Lucien Buonaparte states that his brother seriously thought for a time of taking a commission in the forces of the British East India Company ; but I am assured by our officials that no record of any application now exists.

After firing off this tirade Buonaparte returned to his regiment at Auxonne (February, 1791). It was high time; for his furlough, though prolonged on the plea of ill-health, had expired in the preceding October, and he was therefore liable to six months' imprisonment. But the young officer rightly gauged the weakness of the moribund monarchy; and the officers of his almost mutinous regiment were glad to get him back on any terms. Everywhere in his journey through Provence and Dauphiné, Buonaparte saw the triumph of revolutionary principles. He notes that the peasants are to a man for the Revolution; so are the rank and file of the regiment. The officers are aristocrats, along with three-fourths of those who belong to "good society": so are all the women, for "Liberty is fairer than they, and eclipses them." The Revolution was evidently gaining completer hold over his mind and was somewhat blurring his insular sentiments, when a rebuff from Paoli further weakened his ties to Corsica. Buonaparte had dedicated to him his work on Corsica, and had sent him the manuscript for his approval. After keeping it an unconscionable time, the old man now coldly replied that he did not desire the honour of Buonaparte's panegyric, though he thanked him heartily for it; that the consciousness of having done his duty sufficed for him in his old age; and, for the rest, history should not be written in youth. A further request from Joseph Buonaparte for the return of the slighted manuscript brought the answer that he, Paoli, had no time to search his papers. After this, how could hero-worship subsist?

The four months spent by Buonaparte at Auxonne were, indeed, a time of disappointment and hardship. Out of his slender funds he paid for the education of his younger brother, Louis, who shared his otherwise desolate lodging. A room almost bare but for a curtainless bed, a table heaped with books and papers, and two chairs—such were the surroundings of the lieutenant in the spring of 1791. He lived on bread that he might rear his brother for the army, and that he might buy

books, overjoyed when his savings mounted to the price of some coveted volume.

Perhaps the depressing conditions of his life at Auxonne may account for the acrid tone of an essay which he there wrote in competition for a prize offered by the Academy of Lyons on the subject—"What truths and sentiments ought to be inculcated to men for their happiness." It was unsuccessful; and modern readers will agree with the verdict of one of the judges that it was incongruous in arrangement and of a bad and ragged style. The thoughts are set forth in jerky, vehement clauses; and, in place of the *sensibilité* of some of his earlier effusions, we feel here the icy breath of materialism. He regards an ideal human society as a geometrical structure based on certain well-defined postulates. All men ought to be able to satisfy certain elementary needs of their nature; but all that is beyond is questionable or harmful. The ideal legislator will curtail wealth so as to restore the wealthy to their true nature—and so forth. Of any generous outlook on the wider possibilities of human life there is scarcely a trace. His essay is the apotheosis of social mediocrity. By Procrustean methods he would have forced mankind back to the dull levels of Sparta: the opalescent glow of Athenian life was beyond his ken. But perhaps the most curious passage is that in which he preaches against the sin and folly of ambition. He pictures Ambition as a figure with pallid cheeks, wild eyes, hasty step, jerky movements and sardonic smile, for whom crimes are a sport, while lies and calumnies are merely arguments and figures of speech. Then, in words that recall Juvenal's satire on Hannibal's career, he continues: "What is Alexander doing when he rushes from Thebes into Persia and thence into India? He is ever restless, he loses his wits, he believes himself God. What is the end of Cromwell? He governs England. But is he not tormented by all the daggers of the furies?"—The words ring false, even for this period of Buonaparte's life; and one can readily under-

stand his keen wish in later years to burn every copy of these youthful essays. But they have nearly all survived; and the diatribe against ambition itself supplies the feather wherewith history may wing her shaft at the towering flight of the imperial eagle.[1]

At midsummer he is transferred, as first lieutenant, to another regiment which happened to be quartered at Valence; but his second sojourn there is remarkable only for signs of increasing devotion to the revolutionary cause. In the autumn of 1791 he is again in Corsica on furlough, and remains there until the month of May following. He finds the island rent by strifes which it would be tedious to describe. Suffice it to say that the breach between Paoli and the Buonapartes gradually widened owing to the dictator's suspicion of all who favoured the French Revolution. The young officer certainly did nothing to close the breach. Determined to secure his own election as lieutenant-colonel in the new Corsican National Guard, he spent much time in gaining recruits who would vote for him. He further assured his success by having one of the commissioners, who was acting in Paoli's interest, carried off from his friends and detained at the Buonapartes' house in Ajaccio—his first *coup*.[2] Stranger events were to follow. At Easter, when the people were excited by the persecuting edicts against the clergy and the closing of a monastery, there was sharp fighting between the populace and

[1] The whole essay is evidently influenced by the works of the democrat Raynal, to whom Buonaparte dedicated his "Lettres sur la Corse." To the "Discours de Lyons" he prefixed as motto the words "Morality will exist when governments are free," which he modelled on a similar phrase of Raynal. The following sentences are also noteworthy: "Notre organisation animale a des besoins indispensables: manger, dormir, engendrer. Une nourriture, une cabane, des vêtements, une femme, sont donc une stricte nécessité pour le bonheur. Notre organisation intellectuelle a des appétits non moins impérieux et dont la satisfaction est beaucoup plus précieuse. C'est dans leur entier développement que consiste vraiment le bonheur. Sentir et raisonner, voilà proprement le fait de l'homme."

[2] Nasica; Chuquet, p. 248.

Buonaparte's companies of National Guards. Originating in a petty quarrel, which was taken up by eager partisans, it embroiled the whole of the town and gave the ardent young Jacobin the chance of overthrowing his enemies. His plans even extended to the seizure of the citadel, where he tried to seduce the French regiment from its duty to officers whom he dubbed aristocrats. The attempt was a failure. The whole truth can, perhaps, scarcely be discerned amidst the tissue of lies which speedily enveloped the affair; but there can be no doubt that on the second day of strife Buonaparte's National Guards began the fight and subsequently menaced the regular troops in the citadel. The conflict was finally stopped by commissioners sent by Paoli; and the volunteers were sent away from the town.

Buonaparte's position now seemed desperate. His conduct exposed him to the hatred of most of his fellow-citizens and to the rebukes of the French War Department. In fact, he had doubly sinned: he had actually exceeded his furlough by four months: he was technically guilty, first of desertion, and secondly of treason. In ordinary times he would have been shot, but the times were extraordinary, and he rightly judged that when a Continental war was brewing, the most daring course was also the most prudent, namely, to go to Paris. Thither Paoli allowed him to proceed, doubtless on the principle of giving the young madcap a rope wherewith to hang himself.

On his arrival at Marseilles, he hears that war has been declared by France against Austria; for the republican Ministry, which Louis XVI. had recently been compelled to accept, believed that war against an absolute monarch would intensify revolutionary fervour in France and hasten the advent of the Republic. Their surmises were correct. Buonaparte, on his arrival at Paris, witnessed the closing scenes of the reign of Louis XVI. On June 20th he saw the crowd burst into the Tuileries, when for some hours it insulted the king and queen. Warmly though he had espoused the principles of the

Revolution, his patrician blood boiled at the sight of these vulgar outrages, and he exclaimed: "Why don't they sweep off four or five hundred of that *canaille* with cannon? The rest would then run away fast enough." The remark is significant. If his brain approved the Jacobin creed, his instincts were always with monarchy. His career was to reconcile his reason with his instincts, and to impose on weary France the curious compromise of a revolutionary Imperialism.

On August 10th, from the window of a shop near the Tuileries, he looked down on the strange events which dealt the *coup de grâce* to the dying monarchy. Again the chieftain within him sided against the vulture rabble and with the well-meaning monarch who kept his troops to a tame defensive. "If Louis XVI." (so wrote Buonaparte to his brother Joseph) "had mounted his horse, the victory would have been his—so I judge from the spirit which prevailed in the morning." When all was over, when Louis sheathed his sword and went for shelter to the National Assembly, when the fierce Marseillais were slaughtering the Swiss Guards and bodyguards of the king, Buonaparte dashed forward to save one of these unfortunates from a southern sabre. "Southern comrade, let us save this poor wretch.—Are you of the south?—Yes.—Well, we will save him."

Altogether, what a time of disillusionment this was to the young officer. What depths of cruelty and obscenity it revealed in the Parisian rabble. What folly to treat them with the Christian forbearance shown by Louis XVI. How much more suitable was grapeshot than the beatitudes. The lesson was stored up for future use at a somewhat similar crisis on this very spot.

During the few days when victorious Paris left Louis with the sham title of king, Buonaparte received his captain's commission, which was signed for the king by Servan, the War Minister. Thus did the revolutionary Government pass over his double breach of military discipline at Ajaccio. The revolutionary motto, "La carrière ouverte aux talents," was never more conspicuously illustrated

THE ATTACK ON THE TUILERIES, AUGUST 10TH, 1792.

From the engraving by Helman after a drawing by Monnet, 1792.

than in the facile condoning of his offences and in this rapid promotion. It was indeed a time fraught with vast possibilities for all republican or Jacobinical officers. Their monarchist colleagues were streaming over the frontiers to join the Austrian and Prussian invaders. But National Guards were enrolling by tens of thousands to drive out the Prussian and Austrian invaders; and when Europe looked to see France fall for ever, it saw with wonder her strength renewed as by enchantment. Later on it learnt that that strength was the strength of Antæus, of a peasantry that stood firmly rooted in their native soil. Organization and good leadership alone were needed to transform these ardent masses into the most formidable soldiery; and the brilliant military prospects now opened up certainly knit Buonaparte's feelings more closely with the cause of France. Thus, on September 21st, when the new National Assembly, known as the Convention, proclaimed the Republic, we may well believe that sincere convictions no less than astute calculations moved him to do and dare all things for the sake of the new democratic commonwealth.[1]

For the present, however, a family duty urges him to return to Corsica. He obtains permission to escort home his sister Elise, and for the third time we find him on furlough in Corsica. This laxity of military discipline at such a crisis is explicable only on the supposition that the revolutionary chiefs knew of his devotion to their cause and believed that his influence in the island would render his informal services there more valuable than his regimental duties in the army then invading Savoy. For the word Republic, which fired his imagination, was an offence to Paoli and to most of the islanders; and the

[1] His recantation of Jacobinism was so complete that some persons have doubted whether he ever sincerely held it. The doubt argues a singular *naïveté;* it is laid to rest by Buonaparte's own writings, by his eagerness to disown or destroy them, by the testimony of everyone who knew his early career, and by his own confession: "There have been good Jacobins. At one time every man of spirit was bound to be one. I was one myself." (Thibaudeau, "Mémoires sur le Consulat," p. 59.)

phrase "Republic one and indivisible," ever on the lips of the French, seemed to promise that the island must become a petty replica of France—France that was now dominated by the authors of the vile September massacres. The French party in the island was therefore rapidly declining, and Paoli was preparing to sever the union with France. For this he has been bitterly assailed as a traitor. But, from Paoli's point of view, the acquisition of the island by France was a piece of rank treachery; and his allegiance to France was technically at an end when the king was forcibly dethroned and the Republic was proclaimed. The use of the appellation "traitor" in such a case is merely a piece of childish abuse. It can be justified neither by reference to law, equity, nor to the popular sentiment of the time. Facts were soon to show that the islanders were bitterly opposed to the party then dominant in France. This hostility of a clannish, religious, and conservative populace against the bloodthirsty and atheistical innovators who then lorded it over France was not diminished by the action of some six thousand French volunteers, the off-scourings of the southern ports, who were landed at Ajaccio for an expedition against Sardinia. In their zeal for Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, these *bonnets rouges* came to blows with the men of Ajaccio, three of whom they hanged. So fierce was the resentment caused by this outrage that the plan of a joint expedition for the liberation of Sardinia from monarchical tyranny had to be modified; and Buonaparte, who was again in command of a battalion of Corsican guards, proposed that the islanders alone should proceed to attack the Madalena Isles.

These islands, situated between Corsica and Sardinia, have a double interest to the historical student. One of them, Caprera, was destined to shelter another Italian hero at the close of his career, the noble self-denying Garibaldi: the chief island of the group was the objective of Buonaparte's first essay in regular warfare. After some delays the little force set sail under the

command of Cesari-Colonna, the nephew of Paoli. According to Buonaparte's own official statement at the close of the affair, he had successfully landed his men near the town to be assailed, and had thrown the Sardinian defences into confusion, when a treacherous order from his chief bade him to cease firing and return to the vessels. It has also been stated that this retreat was the outcome of a secret understanding between Paoli and Cesari-Colonna that the expedition should miscarry. This seems highly probable. A mutiny on board the chief ship of the flotilla was assigned by Cesari-Colonna as the cause of his order for a retreat; but there are mutinies and mutinies, and this one may have been a trick of the Paolists for thwarting Buonaparte's plan and leaving him a prisoner. In any case, the young officer only saved himself and his men by a hasty retreat to the boats, tumbling into the sea a mortar and four cannon. Such was the ending to the great captain's first military enterprise.

On his return to Ajaccio (March 3rd, 1793), Buonaparte found affairs in utter confusion. News had recently arrived of the declaration of war by the French Republic against England and Holland. Moreover, Napoleon's young brother, Lucien, had secretly denounced Paoli to the French authorities at Toulon; and three commissioners were now sent from Paris charged with orders to disband the Corsican National Guards, and to place the Corsican dictator under the orders of the French general commanding the army of Italy.[1]

A game of truly Macchiavellian skill is now played. The French commissioners, among whom the Corsican deputy, Salicetti, is by far the most able, invite Paoli to repair to Toulon, there to concert measures for the defence of Corsica. Paoli, seeing through the ruse and discerning a guillotine, pleads that his age makes the journey impossible; but with his friends he quietly

[1] I use the term *commissioner* as equivalent to the French *représentant en mission*, whose powers were almost limitless.

prepares for resistance and holds the citadel of Ajaccio. Meanwhile the commissioners make friendly overtures to the old chief; in these Napoleon participates, being ignorant of Lucien's action at Toulon. The sincerity of these overtures may well be called in question, though Buonaparte still used the language of affection to his former idol. However this may be, all hope of compromise is dashed by the zealots who are in power at Paris. On April 2nd they order the French commissioners to secure Paoli's person, by whatever means, and bring him to the French capital. At once a cry of indignation goes up from all parts of Corsica; and Buonaparte draws up a declaration, vindicating Paoli's conduct and begging the French Convention to revoke its decree.[1] Again, one cannot but suspect that this declaration was intended mainly, if not solely, for local consumption. In any case, it failed to cool the resentment of the populace; and the partisans of France soon came to blows with the Paolists.

Salicetti and Buonaparte now plan by various artifices to gain the citadel of Ajaccio from the Paolists, but guile is three times foiled by guile equally astute. Failing here, the young captain seeks to communicate with the French commissioners at Bastia. He sets out secretly, with a trusty shepherd as companion, to cross the island: but at the village of Bocognano he is recognized and imprisoned by the partisans of Paoli. Some of the villagers, however, retain their old affection to the Buonaparte family, which here has an ancestral estate, and secretly set him free. He returns to Ajaccio, only to find an order for his arrest issued by the Corsican patriots. This time he escapes by timely concealment in the grotto of a friend's garden; and from the grounds of another family connection he finally glides away in a vessel to a point of safety, whence he reaches Bastia.

[1] See this curious document in Jung, "Bonaparte et son Temps," vol. ii., p. 249. Masson ignores it, but admits that the Paolists and partisans of France were only seeking to dupe one another.

Still, though a fugitive, he persists in believing that Ajaccio is French at heart, and urges the sending of a liberating force. The French commissioners agree, and the expedition sails—only to meet with utter failure. Ajaccio, as one man, repels the partisans of France; and, a gale of wind springing up, Buonaparte and his men regain their boats with the utmost difficulty. At a place hard by, he finds his mother, uncle, brothers and sisters. Madame Buonaparte, with the extraordinary tenacity of will that characterized her famous son, had wished to defend her house at Ajaccio against the hostile populace; but, yielding to the urgent warnings of friends, finally fled to the nearest place of safety, and left the house to the fury of the populace, by whom it was nearly wrecked.

For a brief space Buonaparte clung to the hope of regaining Corsica for the Republic, but now only by the aid of French troops. For the islanders, stung by the demand of the French Convention that Paoli should go to Paris, had rallied to the dictator's side; and the aged chief made overtures to England for alliance. The partisans of France, now menaced by England's naval power, were in an utterly untenable position. Even the steel-like will of Buonaparte was bent. His career in Corsica was at an end for the present; and with his kith and kin he set sail for France.

The interest of the events above described lies, not in their intrinsic importance, but in the signal proof which they afford of Buonaparte's wondrous endowments of mind and will. In a losing cause and in a petty sphere he displays all the qualities which, when the omens were favourable, impelled him to the domination of a Continent. He fights every inch of ground tenaciously; at each emergency he evinces a truly Italian fertility of resource, gliding round obstacles or striving to shatter them by sheer audacity, seeing through men, cajoling them by his insinuations or overawing them by his mental superiority, ever determined to try the fickle jade Fortune to the very utmost, and retreating only before

the inevitable. The sole weakness discoverable in this nature, otherwise compact of strength, is an excess of will-power over all the faculties that make for prudence. His vivid imagination only serves to fire him with the full assurance that he must prevail over all obstacles.

And yet, if he had now stopped to weigh well the lessons of the past, hitherto fertile only in failures and contradictions, he must have seen the powerlessness of his own will when in conflict with the forces of the age; for he had now severed his connection with the Corsican patriots, of whose cause he had only two years before been the most passionate champion. It is evident that the schism which finally separated Buonaparte and Paoli originated in their divergence of views regarding the French Revolution. Paoli accepted revolutionary principles only in so far as they promised to base freedom on a due balance of class interests. He was a follower of Montesquieu. He longed to see in Corsica a constitution similar to that of England or to that of 1791 in France. That hope vanished alike for France and Corsica after the fall of the monarchy; and towards the Jacobinical Republic, which banished orthodox priests and guillotined the amiable Louis, Paoli thenceforth felt naught but loathing: "We have been the enemies of kings," he said to Joseph Buonaparte; "let us never be their executioners." Thenceforth he drifted inevitably into alliance with England.

Buonaparte, on the other hand, was a follower of Rousseau, whose ideas leaped to power at the downfall of the monarchy. Despite the excesses which he ever deplored, this second Revolution appeared to him to be the dawn of a new and intelligent age. The clear-cut definitions of the new political creed dovetailed in with his own rigid views of life. Mankind was to be saved by law, society being levelled down and levelled up until the ideals of Lycurgus were attained. Consequently he regarded the Republic as a mighty agency for the social regeneration not only of France, but of all peoples. His insular sentiments were gradually merged in these vaster

EXECUTION OF MARIE ANTOINETTE, OCTOBER 16TH, 1793, ON THE SITE OF THE PRESENT PLACE DE LA CONCORDE.

From the engraving by Helman after a drawing by Monnet, 1796.

schemes. Self-interest and the differentiating effects of party strifes undoubtedly assisted the mental transformation; but it is clear that the study of the "Social Contract" was the touchstone of his early intellectual growth. He had gone to Rousseau's work to deepen his Corsican patriotism: he there imbibed doctrines which drew him irresistibly into the vortex of the French Revolution, and of its wars of propaganda and conquest.

CHAPTER III

TOULON

WHEN Buonaparte left Corsica for the coast of Provence, his career had been remarkable only for the strange contrast between the brilliance of his gifts and the utter failure of all his enterprises. His French partisanship had, as it seemed, been the ruin of his own and his family's fortunes. At the age of twenty-four he was known only as the unlucky leader of forlorn hopes and an outcast from the island around which his fondest longings had been entwined. His land-fall on the French coast seemed no more promising; for at that time Provence was on the verge of revolt against the revolutionary Government. Even towns like Marseilles and Toulon, which a year earlier had been noted for their republican fervour, were now disgusted with the course of events at Paris. In the third climax of revolutionary fury, that of June 2nd, 1793, the more enlightened of the two republican factions, the Girondins, had been overthrown by their opponents, the men of the Mountain, who, aided by the Parisian rabble, seized on power. Most of the Departments of France resented this violence and took up arms. But the men of the Mountain acted with extraordinary energy: they proclaimed the Girondins to be in league with the invaders, and blasted their opponents with the charge of conspiring to divide France into federal republics. The Committee of Public Safety, now installed in power at Paris, decreed a *levée en masse* of able-bodied patriots to defend the sacred soil of the Republic, and the "organizer of victory," Carnot, soon drilled into a terrible efficiency the hosts that sprang

from the soil. On their side the Girondins had no organization whatever, and were embarrassed by the adhesion of very many royalists. Consequently their wavering groups speedily gave way before the impact of the new, solid, central power.

A movement so wanting in definiteness as that of the Girondins was destined to slide into absolute opposition to the men of the Mountain: it was doomed to become royalist. Certainly it did not command the adhesion of Napoleon. His inclinations are seen in his pamphlet, "Le Souper de Beaucaire," which he published in August, 1793. He wrote it in the intervals of some regimental work which had come to hand: and his passage through the little town of Beaucaire seems to have suggested the scenic setting of this little dialogue. It purports to record a discussion between an officer—Buonaparte himself—two merchants of Marseilles, and citizens of Nîmes and Montpellier. It urges the need of united action under the lead of the Jacobins. The officer reminds the Marseillais of the great services which their city has rendered to the cause of liberty. Let Marseilles never disgrace herself by calling in the Spanish fleet as a protection against Frenchmen. Let her remember that this civil strife was part of a fight to the death between French patriots and the despots of Europe. That was, indeed, the practical point at issue; the stern logic of facts ranged on the Jacobin side all clear-sighted men who were determined that the Revolution should not be stamped out by the foreign invaders. On the ground of mere expediency, men must rally to the cause of the Jacobinical Republic. Every crime might be condoned, provided that the men now in power at Paris saved the country. Better their tyranny than the vengeance of the emigrant *noblesse*. Such was the instinct of most Frenchmen, and it saved France.

As an *exposé* of keen policy and all-dominating opportunism, "Le Souper de Beaucaire" is admirable. In a national crisis anything that saves the State is justifiable —that is its argument. The men of the Mountain are

abler and stronger than the Girondins: therefore the Marseillais are foolish not to bow to the men of the Mountain. The author feels no sympathy with the generous young Girondins, who, under the inspiration of Madame Roland, sought to establish a republic of the virtues even while they converted monarchical Europe by the sword. Few men can now peruse with undimmed eyes the tragic story of their fall. But the scenes of 1793 had transformed the Corsican youth into a dry-eyed opportunist who rejects the Girondins as he would have thrown aside a defective tool: nay, he blames them as "guilty of the greatest of crimes."[1]

Nevertheless Buonaparte was alive to the miseries of the situation. He was weary of civil strifes, in which it seemed that no glory could be won. He must hew his way to fortune, if only in order to support his family, which was now drifting about from village to village of Provence and subsisting on the slender sums doled out by the Republic to Corsican exiles.

He therefore applied, though without success, for a regimental exchange to the army of the Rhine. But while toiling through his administrative drudgery in Provence, his duties brought him near to Toulon, where the Republic was face to face with triumphant royalism. The hour had struck: the man now appeared.

In July, 1793, Toulon joined other towns of the south in declaring against Jacobin tyranny; and the royalists of the town, despairing of making headway against the troops of the Convention, admitted English and Spanish squadrons to the harbour to hold the town for Louis XVII. (August 28th). This event shot an electric thrill through France. It was the climax of a long series of disasters. Lyons had hoisted the white flag of the Bourbons, and was making a desperate defence against the forces of the

[1] Buonaparte, when First Consul, was dunned for payment by the widow of the Avignon bookseller who published the "Souper de Beaucaire." He paid her well for having all the remaining copies destroyed. Yet Panckoucke in 1818 procured one copy, which preserved the memory of Buonaparte's early Jacobinism.

Convention: the royalist peasants of La Vendée had several times scattered the National Guards in utter rout: the Spaniards were crossing the Eastern Pyrenees: the Piedmontese were before the gates of Grenoble; and in the north and on the Rhine a doubtful contest was raging.

Such was the condition of France when Buonaparte drew near to the republican forces encamped near Ollioules, to the north-west of Toulon. He found them in disorder: their commander, Carteaux, had left the easel to learn the art of war, and was ignorant of the range of his few cannon; Dommartin, their artillery commander, had been disabled by a wound; and the Commissioners of the Convention, who were charged to put new vigour into the operations, were at their wits' end for lack of men and munitions. One of them was Salicetti, who hailed his coming as a godsend, and urged him to take Dommartin's place. Thus, on September 16th, the thin, sallow, threadbare figure took command of the artillery.

The republicans menaced the town on two sides. Carteaux with some 8,000 men held the hills between Toulon and Ollioules, while a corps 3,000 strong, under Lapoype, observed the fortress on the side of La Valette. Badly led though they were, they wrested the valley north of Mount Faron from the allied outposts, and nearly completed the besiegers' lines (September 18th). In fact, the garrison, which comprised only 2,000 British troops, 4,000 Spaniards, 1,500 French royalists, together with some Neapolitans and Piedmontese, was insufficient to defend the many positions around the city on which its safety depended. Indeed, General Grey wrote to Pitt that 50,000 men were needed to garrison the place; but, as that was double the strength of the British regular army then, the English Minister could only hold out hopes of the arrival of an Austrian corps and a few hundred British.[1]

[1] I have chiefly followed the careful account of the siege given by Cottin in his "Toulon et les Anglais en 1793" (Paris, 1898).

The following official figures show the weakness of the British army. In December, 1792, the parliamentary vote was for 17,344

Before Buonaparte's arrival the Jacobins had no artillery: true, they had a few field-pieces, four heavier guns and two mortars, which a sergeant helplessly surveyed; but they had no munitions, no tools, above all no method and no discipline. Here then was the opportunity for which he had been pining. At once he assumes the tone of a master. "You mind your business, and let me look after mine," he exclaims to officious infantrymen; "it is artillery that takes fortresses: infantry gives its help." The drudgery of the last weeks now yields fruitful results: his methodical mind, brooding over the chaos before him, flashes back to this or that detail in some coast fort or magazine: his energy hustles on the leisurely Provençaux, and in a few days he has a respectable park of artillery—fourteen cannon, four mortars, and the necessary stores. In a brief space the Commissioners show their approval of his services by promoting him to the rank of *chef de bataillon*.

By this time the tide was beginning to turn in favour of the Republic. On October 9th Lyons fell before the Jacobins. The news lends a new zest to the Jacobins, whose left wing had (October 1st) been severely handled by the allies on Mount Faron. Above all, Buonaparte's artillery can be still further strengthened. "I have despatched," he wrote to the Minister of War, "an intelligent officer to Lyons, Briançon, and Grenoble, to procure what might be useful to us. I have requested the Army of Italy to furnish us with the cannon now useless for the defence of Antibes and Monaco. . . . I have established at Ollioules an arsenal with 80 workers. I have requisitioned horses from Nice right to Valence

men as "guards and garrisons," besides a few at Gibraltar and Sydney. In February, 1793, 9,945 additional men were voted and 100 "independent companies": Hanoverians were also embodied. In February, 1794, the number of British regulars was raised to 60,244. For the navy the figures were: December, 1792, 20,000 sailors and 5,000 marines; February, 1793, 20,000 *additional* seamen; for 1794, 73,000 seamen and 12,000 marines. ("Ann. Reg.")

and Montpellier. . . . I am having 5,000 gabions made every day at Marseilles." But he was more than a mere organizer. He was ever with his men, animating them by his own ardour: "I always found him at his post," wrote Doppet, who now succeeded Carteaux; "when he needed rest he lay on the ground wrapped in his cloak: he never left the batteries." There, amidst the autumn rains, he contracted the febrile symptoms which for several years deepened the pallor of his cheeks and furrowed the rings under his eyes, giving him that uncanny, almost spectral, look which struck a chill to all who saw him first and knew not the fiery energy that burnt within. There, too, his zeal, his unfailing resource, his bulldog bravery, and that indefinable quality which separates genius from talent speedily conquered the hearts of the French soldiery. One example of this magnetic power must here suffice. He had ordered a battery to be made so near to Fort Mulgrave that Salicetti described it as within a pistol-shot of the English guns. Could it be worked, its effect would be decisive. But who could work it? The first day saw all its gunners killed or wounded, and even the reckless Jacobins flinched from facing the iron hail. "Call it *the battery of the fearless*," ordered the young captain. The generous French nature was touched at its tenderest point, personal and national honour, and the battery thereafter never lacked its full complement of gunners, living and dead.

The position at Fort Mulgrave, or the Little Gibraltar, was, indeed, all important; for if the republicans seized that commanding position, the allied squadrons could be overpowered, or at least compelled to sail away; and with their departure Toulon must fall.

Here we come on to ground that has been fiercely fought over in wordy war. Did Buonaparte originate the plan of attack? Or did he throw his weight and influence into a scheme that others beside him had designed? Or did he merely carry out orders as a subordinate? According to the Commissioner Barras, the

last was the case. But Barras was with the eastern wing of the besiegers, that is, some miles away from the side of La Seyne and L'Eguillette, where Buonaparte fought. Besides, Barras' "Mémoires" are so untruthful where Buonaparte is concerned, as to be unworthy of serious attention, at least on these points.[1] The historian M. Jung likewise relegates Buonaparte to a quite subordinate position.[2] But his narrative omits some of the official documents which show that Buonaparte played a very important part in the siege. Other writers claim that Buonaparte's influence on the whole conduct of operations was paramount and decisive. Thus, M. Duruy quotes the letter of the Commissioners to the Convention: "We shall take care not to lay siege to Toulon by ordinary means, when we have a surer means to reduce it, that is, by burning the enemy's fleet. . . . We are only waiting for the siege-guns before taking up a position whence we may reach the ships with red-hot balls; and we shall see if we are not masters of Toulon." But this very letter disproves the Buonapartist claim. It was written on September 13th. Thus, *three days before Buonaparte's arrival*, the Commissioners had fully decided on attacking the Little Gibraltar; and the claim that Buonaparte originated the plan can only be sustained by antedating his arrival at Toulon.[3] In fact, every experienced officer among besiegers and besieged saw the weak point of the defence: early in September Hood and Mulgrave began the fortification of the heights behind L'Eguillette. In face of these facts, the assertion that Buonaparte was the first to design the movements which secured the

[1] Barras' "Mémoires" are not by any means wholly his. They are a compilation by Rousselin de Saint-Albin from the Barras papers.

[2] Jung, "Bonaparte et son Temps," vol. ii.

[3] M. G. Duruy's elaborate plea (Barras, "Mems.," Introduction, pp. 69-79) rests on the supposition that his hero arrived at Toulon on September 7th. But M. Chuquet has shown ("Cosmopolis," January, 1897) that he arrived there not earlier than September 16th. So too Cottin, ch. xi.

THE SIEGE OF TOULON, 1793, from "L'Histoire de France depuis la Révolution de 1789," by Emmanuel Toulougeon. Paris,

surrender of Toulon must be relegated to the domain of hero-worship. (See note on p. 56.)

Carteaux having been superseded by Doppet, more energy was thrown into the operations. Yet for him Buonaparte had scarcely more respect. On November 15th an affair of outposts near Fort Mulgrave showed his weakness. The soldiers on both sides eagerly took up the affray; line after line of the French rushed up towards that frowning redoubt: O'Hara, the leader of the allied troops, encouraged the British in a sortie that drove back the blue-coats; whereupon Buonaparte headed the rallying rush to the gorge of the redoubt, when Doppet sounded the retreat. Half blinded by rage and by the blood trickling from a slight wound in his forehead, the young Corsican rushed back to Doppet and abused him in the language of the camp: "Our blow at Toulon has missed, because a —— has beaten the retreat." The soldiery applauded this revolutionary licence, and bespattered their chief with similar terms.

A few days later the tall soldierly Dugommier took the command: reinforcements began to pour in, finally raising the strength of the besiegers to 37,000 men. Above all, the new commander gave Buonaparte *carte blanche* for the direction of the artillery. New batteries accordingly began to ring the Little Gibraltar on the landward side; O'Hara, while gallantly heading a sortie, fell into the republicans' hands, and the defenders began to lose heart. The worst disappointment was the refusal of the Austrian Court to fulfil its promise, solemnly given in September, to send 5,000 regular troops for the defence of Toulon.

The final conflict took place on the night of December 16-17, when torrents of rain, a raging wind, and flashes of lightning added new horrors to the strife. Scarcely had the assailants left the sheltering walls of La Seyne, than Buonaparte's horse fell under him, shot dead: whole companies went astray in the darkness: yet the first column of 2,000 men led by Victor rush at the palisades of Fort Mulgrave, tear them down, and sweep into the

redoubt, only to fall in heaps before a second line of defence: supported by the second column, they rally, only to yield once more before the murderous fire. In despair, Dugommier hurries on the column of reserve, with which Buonaparte awaits the crisis of the night. Led by the gallant young Muiron, the reserve sweeps into the gorge of death; Muiron, Buonaparte, and Dugommier hack their way through the same embrasure: their men swarm in on the overmatched red-coats and Spaniards, cut them down at their guns, and the redoubt is won.

This event was decisive. The Neapolitans, who were charged to hold the neighbouring forts, flung themselves into the sea; and the ships themselves began to weigh anchor; for Buonaparte's guns soon poured their shot on the fleet and into the city itself. But even in that desperate strait the allies turned fiercely to bay. On the evening of December 17th a young officer, who was destined once more to thwart Buonaparte's designs, led a small body of picked men into the dockyard to snatch from the rescuing clutch of the Jacobins the French warships that could not be carried off. Then was seen a weird sight. The galley slaves, now freed from their chains and clustering in angry groups, menaced the intruders. Yet the British seamen spread the combustibles and let loose the demon of destruction. Forthwith the flames shot up the masts, and licked up the stores of hemp, tar, and timber: and the explosion of two powder-ships by the Spaniards shook the earth for many miles around. Napoleon ever retained a vivid mental picture of the scene, which amid the hated calm of St. Helena he thus described: "The whirlwind of flames and smoke from the arsenal resembled the eruption of a volcano, and the thirteen vessels blazing in the roads were like so many displays of fireworks: the masts and forms of the vessels were distinctly traced out by the flames, which lasted many hours and formed an unparalleled spectacle."[1] The sight struck horror to the

[1] As the burning of the French ships and stores has been said to be solely due to the English, we may note that, *as early as*

hearts of the royalists of Toulon, who saw in it the signal of desertion by the allies; and through the lurid night crowds of panic-stricken wretches thronged the quays crying aloud to be taken away from the doomed city. The glare of the flames, the crash of the enemy's bombs, the explosion of the two powder-ships, frenzied many a soul; and scores of those who could find no place in the boats flung themselves into the sea rather than face the pikes and guillotines of the Jacobins. Their fears were only too well founded; for a fortnight later Fréron, the Commissioner of the Convention, boasted that two hundred royalists perished daily.

It remains briefly to consider a question of special interest to English readers. Did the Pitt Ministry intend to betray the confidence of the French royalists and keep Toulon for England? The charge has been brought by certain French writers that the British, after entering Toulon with promise that they would hold it in pledge for Louis XVII., nevertheless lorded it over the other allies and revealed their intention of keeping that stronghold. These writers aver that Hood, after entering Toulon as an equal with the Spanish admiral, Langara, laid claim to entire command of the land forces; that English commissioners were sent for the administration of the town; and that the English Government refused to allow the coming of the Comte de Provence, who, as the elder of the two surviving brothers of Louis XVI., was entitled to act on behalf of Louis XVII.[1] The facts in the main are correct, but the interpretation put upon them may well be questioned. Hood certainly acted with much arrogance towards the Spaniards. But when the more courteous O'Hara arrived to take command of the British, Neapolitan, and Sardinian troops,

October 3rd, the Spanish Foreign Minister, the Duc d'Alcuida, suggested it to our ambassador, Lord St. Helens: "If it becomes necessary to abandon the harbour, these vessels shall be sunk or set on fire in order that the enemy may not make use of them; for which purpose preparations shall be made beforehand."

[1] Thiers, ch. xxx.; Cottin, "L'Angleterre et les Princes."

the new commander agreed to lay aside the question of supreme command. It was not till November 30th that the British Government sent off any despatch on the question, which meanwhile had been settled at Toulon by the exercise of that tact in which Hood seems signally to have been lacking. The whole question was personal, not national.

Still less was the conduct of the British Government towards the Comte de Provence a proof of its design to keep Toulon. The records of our Foreign Office show that, before the occupation of that stronghold for Louis XVII., we had declined to acknowledge the claims of his uncle to the Regency. He and his brother, the Comte d'Artois, were notoriously unpopular in France, except with royalists of the old school; and their presence at Toulon would certainly have raised awkward questions about the future government. The conduct of Spain had hitherto been similar.[1] But after the occupation of Toulon, the Court of Madrid judged the presence of the Comte de Provence in that fortress to be advisable; whereas the Pitt Ministry adhered to its former belief, insisted on the difficulty of conducting the defence if the Prince were present as Regent, instructed Mr. Drake, our Minister at Genoa, to use every argument to deter him from proceeding to Toulon, and privately ordered our officers there, in the last resort, to refuse him permission to land. The instructions of October 18th to the royal commissioners at Toulon show that George III. and his Ministers believed they would be compromising the royalist cause by recognizing a regency; and certainly any effort by the allies to prejudice the future settlement would at once have shattered any hopes of a general rally to the royalist side.[2]

[1] See Lord Grenville's despatch of August 9th, 1793, to Lor l St. Helens ("F. O. Records, Spain," No. 28), printed by M. Cottin, p. 428. He does not print the more important despatch of October 22nd, where Grenville asserts that the admission of the French princes would tend to invalidate the constitution of 1791, for which the allies were working.

[2] A letter of Lord Mulgrave to Mr. Trevor, at Turin ("F. O.

Besides, if England meant to keep Toulon, why did she send only 2,200 soldiers? Why did she admit, not only 6,900 Spaniards, but also 4,900 Neapolitans and 1,600 Piedmontese? Why did she accept the armed help of 1,600 French royalists? Why did she urgently plead with Austria to send 5,000 white-coats from Milan? Why, finally, is there no word in the British official despatches as to the eventual keeping of Toulon; while there are several references to *indemnities* which George III. would require for the expenses of the war—such as Corsica or some of the French West Indies? Those despatches show conclusively that England did not wish to keep a fortress that required a permanent garrison equal to half of the British army on its peace footing; but that she did regard it as a good base of operations for the overthrow of the Jacobin rule and the restoration of monarchy; whereupon her services must be requited with some suitable indemnity, either one of the French West Indies or Corsica. These plans were shattered by Buonaparte's skill and the valour of Dugommier's soldiery; but no record has yet leaped to light to convict the Pitt Ministry of the perfidy which Buonaparte, in common with nearly all Frenchmen, charged to their account.

Records, Sardinia," No. 13), states that he had the greatest difficulty in getting on with the French royalists: "You must not send us one *émigré* of any sort—they would be a nuisance: they are all so various and so violent, whether for despotism, constitution, or republic, that we should be distracted with their quarrels; and they are so assuming, forward, dictatorial, and full of complaints, that no business could go on with them. Lord Hood is averse to receiving any of them."

NOTE TO THE THIRD EDITION.—From the information which Mr. Spenser Wilkinson has recently supplied in his article in "The Owens College Hist. Essays" (1902), it would seem that Buonaparte's share in deciding the fate of Toulon was somewhat larger than has here been stated; for though the Commissioners saw the supreme need of attacking the fleet, they do not seem, as far as we know, to have perceived that the hill behind Fort L'Eguillette was the key of the position. Buonaparte's skill and tenacity certainly led to the capture of this height.

CHAPTER IV

VENDÉMIAIRE

THE next period of Buonaparte's life presents few features of interest. He was called upon to supervise the guns and stores for the Army of Italy, and also to inspect the fortifications and artillery of the coast. At Marseilles his zeal outstripped his discretion. He ordered the reconstruction of the fortress which had been destroyed during the Revolution; but when the townsfolk heard the news, they protested so vehemently that the work was stopped and an order was issued for Buonaparte's arrest. From this difficulty the friendship of the younger Robespierre and of Salicetti, the Commissioners of the Convention, availed to rescue him; but the incident proves that his services at Toulon were not so brilliant as to have raised him above the general level of meritorious officers, who were applauded while they prospered, but might be sent to the guillotine for any serious offence.

In April, 1794, he was appointed at Nice general in command of the artillery of the Army of Italy, which drove the Sardinian troops from several positions between Ventimiglia and Oneglia. Thence, swinging round by passes of the Maritime Alps, they outflanked the positions of the Austro-Sardinian forces at the Col di Tenda, which had defied all attack in front. Buonaparte's share in this turning operation seems to have been restricted to the effective handling of artillery, and the chief credit here rested with Masséna, who won the first of his laurels in the country of his birth. He was of humble parentage;

yet his erect bearing, proud animated glance, curt penetrating speech, and keen repartees, proclaimed a nature at once active and wary, an intellect both calculating and confident. Such was the man who was to immortalize his name in many a contest, until his glory paled before the greater genius of Wellington.

Much of the credit of organizing this previously unsuccessful army belongs to the younger Robespierre, who, as Commissioner of the Convention, infused his energy into all departments of the service. For some months his relations to Buonaparte were those of intimacy; but whether they extended to complete sympathy on political matters may be doubted. The younger Robespierre held the revolutionary creed with sufficient ardour, though one of his letters dated from Oneglia suggests that the fame of the Terror was hurtful to the prospects of the campaign. It states that the whole of the neighbouring inhabitants had fled before the French soldiers, in the belief that they were destroyers of religion and eaters of babies: this was inconvenient, as it prevented the supply of provisions and the success of forced loans. The letter suggests that he was a man of action rather than of ideas, and probably it was this practical quality which bound Buonaparte in friendship to him. Yet it is difficult to fathom Buonaparte's ideas about the revolutionary despotism which was then deluging Paris with blood. Outwardly he appeared to sympathize with it. Such at least is the testimony of Marie Robespierre, with whom Buonaparte's sisters were then intimate. "Buonaparte," she said, "was a republican: I will even say that he took the side of the Mountain: at least, that was the impression left on my mind by his opinions when I was at Nice. . . . His admiration for my elder brother, his friendship for my younger brother, and perhaps also the interest inspired by my misfortunes, gained for me, under the Consulate, a pension of 3,600 francs."[1] Equally noteworthy is the later declaration of Napoleon that

[1] Jung, "Bonaparte et son Temps," vol. ii., p. 430.

Robespierre was the "scapegoat of the Revolution."[1] It appears probable, then, that he shared the Jacobinical belief that the Terror was a necessary though painful stage in the purification of the body politic. His admiration of the rigour of Lycurgus, and his dislike of all superfluous luxury, alike favour this supposition; and as he always had the courage of his convictions, it is impossible to conceive him clinging to the skirts of the terrorists merely from a mean hope of prospective favours. That is the alternative explanation of his intimacy with young Robespierre. Some of his injudicious admirers, in trying to disprove his complicity with the terrorists, impale themselves on this horn of the dilemma. In seeking to clear him from the charge of Terrorism, they stain him with the charge of truckling to the terrorists. They degrade him from the level of St. Just to that of Barrère.

A sentence in one of young Robespierre's letters shows that he never felt completely sure about the young officer. After enumerating to his brother Buonaparte's merits, he adds: "He is a Corsican, and offers only the guarantee of a man of that nation who has resisted the caresses of Paoli and whose property has been ravaged by that traitor." Evidently, then, Robespierre regarded Buonaparte with some suspicion as an insular Proteus, lacking those sureties, mental and pecuniary, which reduced a man to dog-like fidelity.

Yet, however warily Buonaparte picked his steps along the slopes of the revolutionary volcano, he was destined to feel the scorch of the central fires. He had recently been intrusted with a mission to the Genoese Republic, which was in a most difficult position. It was subject to pressure from three sides; from English men-of-war that had swooped down on a French frigate, the "Modeste," in Genoese waters; and from actual invasion by the French on the west and by the Austrians

[1] "Mémorial," ch. ii., November, 1815. See also Thibaudeau, "Mémoires sur le Consulat," vol. i., p. 59.

on the north. Despite the great difficulties of his task, the young envoy bent the distracted Doge and Senate to his will. He might, therefore, have expected gratitude from his adopted country; but shortly after he returned to Nice he was placed under arrest, and was imprisoned in a fort near Antibes.

The causes of this swift reverse of fortune were curiously complex. The Robespierres had in the meantime been guillotined at Paris (July 24th, or Thermidor 10th); and this "Thermidorian" reaction alone would have sufficed to endanger Buonaparte's head. But his position was further imperilled by his recent strategic suggestions, which had served to reduce to a secondary *rôle* the French Army of the Alps. The operations of that force had of late been strangely thwarted; and its leaders, searching for the paralyzing influence, discovered it in the advice of Buonaparte. Their suspicions against him were formulated in a secret letter to the Committee of Public Safety, which stated that the Army of the Alps had been kept inactive by the intrigues of the younger Robespierre and of Ricord. Many a head had fallen for reasons less serious than these. But Buonaparte had one infallible safeguard: he could not well be spared. After a careful examination of his papers, the Commissioners, Salicetti and Albitte, provisionally restored him to liberty, but not, for some weeks, to his rank of general (August 20th, 1794). The chief reason assigned for his liberation was the service which his knowledge and talents might render to the Republic, a reference to the knowledge of the Italian coast-line which he had gained during the mission to Genoa.

For a space his daring spirit was doomed to chafe in comparative inactivity, in supervising the coast artillery. But his faults were forgotten in the need which was soon felt for his warlike prowess. An expedition was prepared to free Corsica from "the tyranny of the English"; and in this Buonaparte sailed, as general commanding the artillery. With him were two friends, Junot and Marmont, who had clung to him through his

ROBESPIERRE, COUTHON, AND ST. JUST DECLARED TRAITORS, HÔTEL DE VILLE, JULY 28TH, 1794.

From the engraving by Helman after a drawing by Monnet, 1800.

recent troubles; the former was to be helped to wealth and fame by Buonaparte's friendship, the latter by his own brilliant gifts.[1] In this expedition their talent was of no avail. The French were worsted in an engagement with the British fleet, and fell back in confusion to the coast of France. Once again Buonaparte's Corsican enterprises were frustrated by the ubiquitous lords of the sea: against them he now stored up a double portion of hate, for in the meantime his inspectorship of coast artillery had been given to his fellow-countryman, Casabianca.

The fortunes of these Corsican exiles drifted hither and thither in many perplexing currents, as Buonaparte was once more to discover. It was a prevalent complaint that there were too many of them seeking employment in the army of the south; and a note respecting the career of the young officer made by General Schérer, who now commanded the French Army of Italy, shows that Buonaparte had aroused at least as much suspicion as admiration. It runs: "This officer is general of artillery, and in this arm has sound knowledge, but has somewhat too much ambition and intriguing habits for his advancement." All things considered, it was deemed advisable to transfer him to the army which was engaged in crushing the Vendéan revolt, a service which he loathed and was determined, if possible, to evade. Accompanied by his faithful friends, Marmont and Junot, as also by his young brother Louis, he set out for Paris (May, 1795).

In reality Fortune never favoured him more than when she removed him from the coteries of intriguing Corsicans on the coast of Provence and brought him to

[1] Marmont (1774-1852) became sub-lieutenant in 1789, served with Buonaparte in Italy, Egypt, etc., received the title Duc de Ragusa in 1808, Marshal in 1809; was defeated by Wellington at Salamanca in 1812, deserted to the allies in 1814. Junot (1771-1813) entered the army in 1791; was famed as a cavalry general in the wars 1796-1807; conquered Portugal in 1808, and received the title Duc d'Abrantès; died mad.

the centre of all influence. An able schemer at Paris could decide the fate of parties and governments. At the frontiers men could only accept the decrees of the omnipotent capital. Moreover, the Revolution, after passing through the molten stage, was now beginning to solidify, an important opportunity for the political craftsman. The spring of the year 1795 witnessed a strange blending of the new fanaticism with the old customs. Society, dammed up for a time by the Spartan rigour of Robespierre, was now flowing back into its wonted channels. Gay equipages were seen in the streets; theatres, prosperous even during the Terror, were now filled to overflowing; gambling, whether in money or in stocks and *assignats*, was now permeating all grades of society; and men who had grown rich by amassing the confiscated State lands now vied with bankers, stock-jobbers, and forestallers of grain in vulgar ostentation. As for the poor, they were meeting their match in the gilded youth of Paris, who with clubbed sticks asserted the right of the rich to be merry. If the *sansculottes* attempted to restore the days of the Terror, the National Guards of Paris were ready to sweep them back into the slums. Such was their fate on May 20th, shortly after Buonaparte's arrival at Paris. Any dreams which he may have harboured of restoring the Jacobins to power were dissipated, for Paris now plunged into the gaieties of the *ancien régime*. The Terror was remembered only as a horrible nightmare, which served to add zest to the pleasures of the present. In some circles no one was received who had not lost a relative by the guillotine. With a ghastly merriment characteristic of the time, "victim balls" were given, to which those alone were admitted who could produce the death warrant of some family connection: these secured the pleasure of dancing in costumes which recalled those of the scaffold, and of beckoning ever and anon to their partners with nods that simulated the fall of the severed head. It was for this, then, that the amiable Louis, the majestic Marie Antoinette, the Minerva-like Madame

Roland, the Girondins vowed to the utter quest of liberty, the tyrant-quelling Danton, the incorruptible Robespierre himself, had felt the fatal axe; in order that the mimicry of their death agonies might tickle jaded appetites, and help to weave anew the old Circean spells. So it seemed to the few who cared to think of the frightful sacrifices of the past, and to measure them against the seemingly hopeless degradation of the present.

Some such thoughts seem to have flitted across the mind of Buonaparte in those months of forced inactivity. It was a time of disillusionment. Rarely do we find thenceforth in his correspondence any gleams of faith respecting the higher possibilities of the human race. The golden visions of youth now vanish along with the *bonnet rouge* and the jargon of the Terror. His bent had ever been for the material and practical: and now that faith in the Jacobinical creed was vanishing, it was more than ever desirable to grapple that errant balloon to substantial facts. Evidently, the Revolution must now trust to the clinging of the peasant proprietors to the recently confiscated lands of the Church and of the emigrant nobles. If all else was vain and transitory, here surely was a solid basis of material interests to which the best part of the manhood of France would tenaciously adhere, defying alike the plots of reactionaries and the forces of monarchical Europe. Of these interests Buonaparte was to be the determined guarantor. Amidst much that was visionary in his later policy he never wavered in his championship of the new peasant proprietors. He was ever the peasants' General, the peasants' Consul, the peasants' Emperor.

The transition of the Revolution to an ordinary form of polity was also being furthered by its unparalleled series of military triumphs. When Buonaparte's name was as yet unknown, except in Corsica and Provence, France practically gained her "natural boundaries," the Rhine and the Alps. In the campaigns of 1793-4, the soldiers of Pichegru, Kléber, Hoche, and Moreau over-

ran the whole of the Low Countries and chased the Germans beyond the Rhine; the Piedmontese were thrust behind the Alps; the Spaniards behind the Pyrenees. In quick succession State after State sued for peace: Tuscany in February, 1795; Prussia in April; Hanover, Westphalia, and Saxony in May; Spain and Hesse-Cassel in July; Switzerland and Denmark in August.

Such was the state of France when Buonaparte came to seek his fortunes in the Sphinx-like capital. His artillery command had been commuted to a corresponding rank in the infantry—a step that deeply incensed him. He attributed it to malevolent intriguers; but all his efforts to obtain redress were in vain. Lacking money and patronage, known only as an able officer and facile intriguer of the bankrupt Jacobinical party, he might well have despaired. He was now almost alone. Marmont had gone off to the Army of the Rhine; but Junot was still with him, allured perhaps by Madame Permon's daughter, whom he subsequently married. At the house of this amiable hostess, an old friend of his family, Buonaparte found occasional relief from the gloom of his existence. The future Madame Junot has described him as at this time untidy, unkempt, sickly, remarkable for his extreme thinness and the almost yellow tint of his visage, which was, however, lit up by "two eyes sparkling with keenness and will-power"—evidently a Corsican falcon, pining for action, and fretting its soaring spirit in that vapid town life. Action Buonaparte might have had, but only of a kind that he loathed. He might have commanded the troops destined to crush the brave royalist peasants of La Vendée. But, whether from scorn of such vulture-work, or from an instinct that a nobler quarry might be started at Paris, he refused to proceed to the Army of the West, and on the plea of ill-health remained in the capital. There he spent his time deeply pondering on politics and strategy. He designed a history of the last two years, and drafted a plan of campaign for the Army of

Italy, which, later on, was to bear him to fortune. Probably the geographical insight which it displayed may have led to his appointment (August 20th, 1795) to the topographical bureau of the Committee of Public Safety. His first thought on hearing of this important advancement was that it opened up an opportunity for proceeding to Turkey to organize the artillery of the Sultan; and in a few days he sent in a formal request to that effect—the first tangible proof of that yearning after the Orient which haunted him all through life. But, while straining his gaze eastwards, he experienced a sharp rebuff. The Committee was on the point of granting his request, when an examination of his recent conduct proved him guilty of a breach of discipline in not proceeding to his Vendéan command. On the very day when one department of the Committee empowered him to proceed to Constantinople, the Central Committee erased his name from the list of general officers (September 15th).

This time the blow seemed fatal. But Fortune appeared to compass his falls only in order that he might the more brilliantly tower aloft. Within three weeks he was hailed as the saviour of the new republican constitution. The cause of this almost magical change in his prospects is to be sought in the political unrest of France, to which we must now briefly advert.

All through this summer of 1795 there were conflicts between Jacobins and royalists. In the south the latter party had signally avenged itself for the agonies of the preceding years, and the ardour of the French temperament seemed about to drive that hapless people from the "Red Terror" to a veritable "White Terror," when two disasters checked the course of the reaction. An attempt of a large force of emigrant French nobles, backed up by British money and ships, to rouse Brittany against the Convention was utterly crushed by the able young Hoche; and nearly seven hundred prisoners were afterwards shot down in cold blood (July). Shortly before this blow, the little prince styled Louis XVII. succumbed to the brutal treatment

of his gaolers at the Temple in Paris; and the hopes of the royalists now rested on the unpopular Comte de Provence. Nevertheless, the political outlook in the summer of 1795 was not reassuring to the republicans; and the Commission of Eleven, empowered by the Convention to draft new organic laws, drew up an instrument of government, which, though republican in form, seemed to offer all the stability of the most firmly rooted oligarchy. Some such compromise was perhaps necessary; for the Commonwealth was confronted by three dangers, anarchy resulting from the pressure of the mob, an excessive centralization of power in the hands of two committees, and the possibility of a *coup d'état* by some pretender or adventurer. Indeed, the student of French history cannot fail to see that this is the problem which is ever before the people of France. It has presented itself in acute though diverse phases in 1797, 1799, 1814, 1830, 1848, 1851, and in 1871. Who can say that the problem has yet found its complete solution?

In some respects the constitution which the Convention voted in August, 1795, was skilfully adapted to meet the needs of the time. Though democratic in spirit, it granted a vote only to those citizens who had resided for a year in some dwelling and had paid taxes, thus excluding the rabble who had proved to be dangerous to any settled government. It also checked the hasty legislation which had brought ridicule on successive National Assemblies. In order to moderate the zeal for the manufacture of decrees, which had often exceeded one hundred a month, a second or revising chamber was now to be formed on the basis of age; for it had been found that the younger the deputies the faster came forth the fluttering flocks of decrees, that often came home to roost in the guise of curses. A senatorial guillotine, it was now proposed, should thin out the fledglings before they flew abroad at all. Of the seven hundred and fifty deputies of France, the two hundred and fifty oldest men were to form the Council of Ancients, having powers to amend or reject the proposals

emanating from the Council of Five Hundred. In this Council were the younger deputies, and with them rested the sole initiation of laws. Thus the young deputies were to make the laws, but the older deputies were to amend or reject them ; and this nice adjustment of the characteristics of youth and age, a due blending of enthusiasm with caution, promised to invigorate the body politic and yet guard its vital interests. Lastly, in order that the two Councils should continuously represent the feelings of France, one third of their members must retire for re-election every year, a device which promised to prevent any violent change in their composition, such as might occur if, at the end of their three years' membership, all were called upon to resign at once.

But the real crux of constitution builders had hitherto been in the relations of the Legislature to the Executive. How should the brain of the body politic, that is, the Legislature, be connected with the hand, that is, the Executive? Obviously, so argued all French political thinkers, the two functions were distinct and must be kept separate. The results of this theory of the separation of powers were clearly traceable in the course of the Revolution. When the hand had been left almost powerless, as in 1791-2, owing to democratic jealousy of the royal Ministry, the result had been anarchy. The supreme needs of the State in the agonies of 1793 had rendered the hand omnipotent : the Convention, that is, the brain, was for some time powerless before its own instrument, the two secret committees. Experience now showed that the brain must exercise a general control over the hand, without unduly hampering its actions. Evidently, then, the deputies of France must intrust the details of administration to responsible Ministers, though some directing agency seemed needed as a spur to energy and a check against royalist plots. In brief, the Committee of Public Safety, purged of its more dangerous powers, was to furnish the model for a new body of five members, termed the Directory. This

organism, which was to give its name to the whole period 1795-1799, was not the Ministry. There was no Ministry as we now use the term. There were Ministers who were responsible individually for their departments of State: but they never met for deliberation, or communicated with the Legislature; they were only heads of departments, who were responsible individually to the Directors. These five men formed a powerful committee, deliberating in private on the whole policy of the State and on all the work of the Ministers. The Directory had not, it is true, the right of initiating laws and of arbitrary arrest which the two committees had freely exercised during the Terror. Its dependence on the Legislature seemed also to be guaranteed by the Directors being appointed by the two legislative Councils; while one of the five was to vacate his office for re-election every year. But in other respects the directorial powers were almost as extensive as those wielded by the two secret committees, or as those which Bonaparte was to inherit from the Directory in 1799. They comprised the general control of policy in peace and war, the right to negotiate treaties (subject to ratification by the legislative councils), to promulgate laws voted by the Councils and watch over their execution, and to appoint or dismiss the Ministers of State.

Such was the constitution which was proclaimed on September 22nd, 1795, or 1st Vendémiaire, Year IV., of the revolutionary calendar. An important postscript to the original constitution now excited fierce commotions which enabled the young officer to repair his own shattered fortunes. The Convention, terrified at the thought of a general election, which might send up a malcontent or royalist majority, decided to impose itself on France for at least two years longer. With an effrontery unparalleled in parliamentary annals, it decreed that the law of the new constitution, requiring the re-election of one-third of the deputies every year, should now be applied to itself; and that the rest of its members should sit in the forthcoming Councils. At once a cry of disgust and rage arose from

all who were weary of the Convention and all its works. "Down with the two-thirds!" was the cry that resounded through the streets of Paris. The movement was not so much definitely royalist as vaguely malcontent. The many were enraged by the existing dearth and by the failure of the Revolution to secure even cheap bread. Doubtless the royalists strove to drive on the discontent to the desired goal, and in many parts they tinged the movement with an unmistakably Bourbon tint. But it is fairly certain that in Paris they could not alone have fomented a discontent so general as that of Vendémiaire. That they would have profited by the defeat of the Convention is, however, equally certain. The history of the Revolution proves that those who at first merely opposed the excesses of the Jacobins gradually drifted over to the royalists. The Convention now found itself attacked in the very city which had been the chosen abode of Liberty and Equality. Some thirty thousand of the Parisian National Guards were determined to give short shrift to this Assembly that clung so indecently to life; and as the armies were far away, the Parisian malcontents seemed masters of the situation. Without doubt they would have been but for their own precipitation and the energy of Buonaparte.

But how came he to receive the military authority which was so potently to influence the course of events? We left him in Fructidor disgraced: we find him in the middle of Vendémiaire leading part of the forces of the Convention. This bewildering change was due to the pressing needs of the Republic, to his own signal abilities, and to the discerning eye of Barras, whose career claims a brief notice.

Paul Barras came of a Provençal family, and had an adventurous life both on land and in maritime expeditions. Gifted with a robust frame, consummate self-assurance, and a ready tongue, he was well equipped for intrigues, both amorous and political, when the outbreak of the Revolution gave his thoughts a more serious turn. Espousing the ultra-democratic side, he yet con-

trived to emerge unscathed from the schisms which were fatal to less dextrous trimmers. He was present at the siege of Toulon, and has striven in his "Mémoires" to disparage Buonaparte's services and exalt his own. At the crisis of Thermidor the Convention intrusted him with the command of the "army of the interior," and the energy which he then displayed gained for him the same position in the equally critical days of Vendémiaire. Though he subsequently carped at the conduct of Buonaparte, his action proved his complete confidence in that young officer's capacity: he at once sent for him, and intrusted him with most important duties. Herein lies the chief chance of immortality for the name of Barras; not that, as a terrorist, he slaughtered royalists at Toulon; not that he was the military chief of the Thermidorians, who, from fear of their own necks, ended the supremacy of Robespierre; not even that he degraded the new *régime* by a cynical display of all the worst vices of the old; but rather because he was now privileged to hold the stirrup for the great captain who vaulted lightly into the saddle.

The present crisis certainly called for a man of skill and determination. The malcontents had been emboldened by the timorous actions of General Menou, who had previously been intrusted with the task of suppressing the agitation. Owing to a praiseworthy desire to avoid bloodshed, that general wasted time in parleying with the most rebellious of the "sections" of Paris. The Convention now appointed Barras to the command, while Buonaparte, Brune, Carteaux, Dupont, Loison, Vachot, and Vézu were charged to serve under him.[1] Such was the decree of the Convention, which therefore refutes Napoleon's later claim that he was in command, and that of his admirers that he was second in command.

[1] M. Zivy, "Le treize Vendémiaire," pp. 60-62, quotes the decree assigning the different commands. A MS. written by Buonaparte, now in the French War Office Archives, proves also that it was Barras who gave the order to fetch the cannon from the Sablons camp.

Yet, intrusted from the outset by Barras with important duties, he unquestionably became the animating spirit of the defence. "From the first," says Thiébault, "his activity was astonishing: he seemed to be everywhere at once: he surprised people by his laconic, clear, and prompt orders: everybody was struck by the vigour of his arrangements, and passed from admiration to confidence, from confidence to enthusiasm." Everything now depended on skill and enthusiasm. The defenders of the Convention, comprising some four or five thousand troops of the line, and between one and two thousand patriots, gendarmes, and Invalides, were confronted by nearly thirty thousand National Guards. The odds were therefore wellnigh as heavy as those which menaced Louis XVI. on the day of his final overthrow. But the place of the yielding king was now filled by determined men, who saw the needs of the situation. In the earlier scenes of the Revolution, Buonaparte had pondered on the efficacy of artillery in street-fighting—a fit subject for his geometrical genius. With a few cannon, he knew that he could sweep all the approaches to the palace; and, on Barras' orders, he despatched a dashing cavalry officer, Murat—a name destined to become famous from Madrid to Moscow—to bring the artillery from the neighbouring camp of Sablons. Murat secured them before the malcontents of Paris could lay hands on them; and as the "sections" of Paris had yielded up their own cannon after the affrays of May, they now lacked the most potent force in street-fighting. Their actions were also paralyzed by divided counsels: their commander, an old general named Danican, moved his men hesitatingly; he wasted precious minutes in parleying, and thus gave time to Barras' small but compact force to fight them in detail. Buonaparte had skilfully disposed his cannon to bear on the royalist columns that threatened the streets north of the Tuileries. But for some time the two parties stood face to face, seeking to cajole or intimidate one another. As the autumn afternoon waned, shots were fired from some houses near the church of

St. Roch, where the malcontents had their headquarters.[1] At once the streets became the scene of a furious fight; furious but unequal; for Buonaparte's cannon tore away the heads of the malcontent columns. In vain did the royalists pour in their volleys from behind barricades, or from the neighbouring houses: finally they retreated on the barricaded church, or fled down the Rue St. Honoré. Meanwhile their bands from across the river, 5,000 strong, were filing across the bridges, and menaced the Tuileries from that side, until here also they melted away before the grapeshot and musketry poured into their front and flank. By six o'clock the conflict was over. The fight presents few, if any, incidents which are authentic. The well-known engraving of Helman, which shows Buonaparte directing the storming of the church of St. Roch is unfortunately quite incorrect. He was not engaged there, but in the streets further east: the church was not stormed: the malcontents held it all through the night, and quietly surrendered it next morning.

Such was the great day of Vendémiaire. It cost the lives of about two hundred on each side; at least, that is the usual estimate, which seems somewhat incongruous with the stories of fusillading and cannonading at close quarters, until we remember that it is the custom of memoir-writers and newspaper editors to trick out the details of a fight, and in the case of civil warfare to minimise the bloodshed. Certainly the Convention acted with clemency in the hour of victory: two only of the rebel leaders were put to death; and it is pleasing to remember that when Menou was charged with treachery, Buonaparte used his influence to procure his freedom.

Bourrienne states that in his later days the victor deeply regretted his action in this day of Vendémiaire. The assertion seems incredible. The "whiff of grapeshot" crushed a movement which could have led only to present anarchy, and probably would have brought

[1] Buonaparte afterwards asserted that it was he who had given the order to fire, and certainly delay was all in favour of his opponents.

France back to royalism of an odious type. It taught a severe lesson to a fickle populace which, according to Mme. de Staël, was hungering for the spoils of place as much as for any political object. Of all the events of his post-Corsican life, Buonaparte need surely never have felt compunctions for Vendémiaire.[1]

After four signal reverses in his career, he now enters on a path strewn with glories. The first reward for his signal services to the Republic was his appointment to be second in command of the army of the interior; and when Barras resigned the first command, he took that responsible post. But more brilliant honours were soon to follow, the first of a social character, the second purely military.

Buonaparte had already appeared timidly and awkwardly at the *salon* of the voluptuous Barras, where the fair but frail Madame Tallien—Notre Dame de Thermidor she was styled—dazzled Parisian society by her classic features and the uncinctured grace of her attire. There he reappeared, not in the threadbare uniform that had attracted the giggling notice of that giddy throng, but as the lion of the society which his talents had saved. His previous attempts to gain the hand of a lady had been unsuccessful. He had been refused, first by Mlle. Clary, sister of his brother Joseph's wife, and quite recently by Madame Permon. Indeed, the scarecrow young officer had not been a brilliant match. But now he saw at that *salon* a charming widow, Josephine de Beauharnais, whose husband had perished in the Terror. The ardour of his southern temperament, long repressed by his privations, speedily rekindles in her presence: his stiff, awkward manners thaw under her smiles: his silence vanishes when she praises his military gifts: he admires her tact, her sympathy, her beauty: he deter-

[1] I caution readers against accepting the statement of Carlyle ("French Revolution," vol. iii. *ad fin.*) that "the thing we specifically call French Revolution is blown into space by the whiff of grapeshot." On the contrary, it was perpetuated, though in a more organic and more orderly governmental form.

mines to marry her. The lady, on her part, seems to have been somewhat terrified by her uncanny wooer: she comments questioningly on his "violent tenderness almost amounting to frenzy": she notes uneasily his "keen inexplicable gaze which imposes even on our Directors": How would this eager nature, this masterful energy, consort with her own "Creole nonchalance"? She did well to ask herself whether the general's almost volcanic passion would not soon exhaust itself, and turn from her own fading charms to those of women who were his equals in age. Besides, when she frankly asked her own heart, she found that she loved him not: she only admired him. Her chief consolation was that if she married him, her friend Barras would help to gain for Buonaparte the command of the Army of Italy. The advice of Barras undoubtedly helped to still the questioning surmises of Josephine; and the wedding was celebrated, as a civil contract, on March 9th, 1796. With a pardonable coquetry, the bride entered her age on the register as four years less than the thirty-four which had passed over her: while her husband, desiring still further to lessen the disparity, entered his date of birth as 1768.

A fortnight before the wedding, he had been appointed to command the Army of Italy: and after a honeymoon of two days at Paris, he left his bride to take up his new military duties. Clearly, then, there was some connection between this brilliant fortune and his espousal of Josephine. But the assertion that this command was the "dowry" offered by Barras to the somewhat reluctant bride is more piquant than correct. That the brilliance of Buonaparte's prospects finally dissipated her scruples may be frankly admitted. But the appointment to a command of a French army did not rest with Barras. He was only one of the five Directors who now decided the chief details of administration. His colleagues were Letourneur, Rewbell, La Réveillière-Lépeaux, and the great Carnot; and, as a matter of fact, it was the last-named who chiefly decided the appointment in question.

NAPOLEON, 1799.

JOSEPHINE.

MEDALLIONS.

From Delaroche's "Trésor de Numismatique" and Edwards' "Napoleon Medals."

He had seen and pondered over the plan of campaign which Buonaparte had designed for the Army of Italy; and the vigour of the conception, the masterly appreciation of topographical details which it displayed, and the trenchant energy of its style had struck conviction to his strategic genius. Buonaparte owed his command, not to a backstairs intrigue, as was currently believed in the army, but rather to his own commanding powers. While serving with the Army of Italy in 1794, he had carefully studied the coast-line and the passes leading inland; and, according to the well-known savant, Volney, the young officer, shortly after his release from imprisonment, sketched out to him and to a Commissioner of the Convention the details of the very plan of campaign which was to carry him victoriously from the Genoese Riviera into the heart of Austria.[1] While describing this masterpiece of strategy, says Volney, Buonaparte spoke as if inspired. We can fancy the wasted form dilating with a sense of power, the thin sallow cheeks aglow with enthusiasm, the hawk-like eyes flashing at the sight of the helpless Imperial quarry, as he pointed out on the map of Piedmont and Lombardy the features which would favour a dashing invader and carry him to the very gates of Vienna. The splendours of the Imperial Court at the Tuileries seem tawdry and insipid when compared with the intellectual grandeur which lit up that humble lodging at Nice with the first rays that heralded the dawn of Italian liberation.

With the fuller knowledge which he had recently acquired, he now in January, 1796, elaborated this plan of campaign, so that it at once gained Carnot's admiration. The Directors forwarded it to General Schérer, who was in command of the Army of Italy, but promptly received the "brutal" reply that the man who had drafted the plan ought to come and carry it out. Long dissatisfied with Schérer's inactivity and constant complaints, the Directory now took him at his word, and replaced him

[1] Chaptal, "Mes Souvenirs sur Napoléon," p. 198.

by Buonaparte. Such is the truth about Buonaparte's appointment to the Army of Italy.

To Nice, then, the young general set out (March 21st) accompanied, or speedily followed, by his faithful friends, Marmont and Junot, as well as by other officers of whose energy he was assured, Berthier, Murat, and Duroc. How much had happened since the early summer of 1795, when he had barely the means to pay his way to Paris! A sure instinct had drawn him to that hot-bed of intrigues. He had played a desperate game, risking his commission in order that he might keep in close touch with the central authority. His reward for this almost superhuman confidence in his own powers was correspondingly great; and now, though he knew nothing of the handling of cavalry and infantry save from books, he determined to lead the Army of Italy to a series of conquests that would rival those of Cæsar. In presence of a will so stubborn and genius so fervid, what wonder that a friend prophesied that his halting-place would be either the throne or the scaffold?

CHAPTER V

THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN

(1796)

IN the personality of Napoleon nothing is more remarkable than the combination of gifts which in most natures are mutually exclusive; his instincts were both political and military; his survey of a land took in not only the geographical environment but also the material welfare of the people. Facts, which his foes ignored, offered a firm fulcrum for the leverage of his will: and their political edifice or their military policy crumbled to ruin under an assault planned with consummate skill and pressed home with relentless force.

For the exercise of all these gifts what land was so fitted as the mosaic of States which was dignified with the name of Italy?

That land had long been the battle-ground of the Bourbons and the Hapsburgs; and their rivalries, aided by civic dissensions, had reduced the people that once had given laws to Europe into a condition of miserable weakness. Europe was once the battle-field of the Romans: Italy was now the battle-field of Europe. The Hapsburgs dominated the north, where they held the rich Duchy of Milan, along with the great stronghold of Mantua, and some scattered imperial fiefs. A scion of the House of Austria reigned at Florence over the prosperous Duchy of Tuscany. Modena and Lucca were under the general control of the Court of Vienna. The south of the peninsula, along with Sicily, was swayed by Ferdinand IV., a descendant of the Spanish

Bourbons, who kept his people in a condition of mediæval ignorance and servitude; and this dynasty controlled the Duchy of Parma. The Papal States were also sunk in the torpor of the Middle Ages; but in the northern districts of Bologna and Ferrara, known as the "Legations," the inhabitants still remembered the time of their independence, and chafed under the irritating restraints of Papal rule. This was seen when the leaven of French revolutionary thought began to ferment in Italian towns. Two young men of Bologna were so enamoured of the new ideas, as to raise an Italian tricolour flag, green, white, and red, and summon their fellow-citizens to revolt against the rule of the Pope's legate (November, 1794). The revolt was crushed, and the chief offenders were hanged; but elsewhere the force of democracy made itself felt, especially among the more virile peoples of Northern Italy. Lombardy and Piedmont throbbed with suppressed excitement. Even when the King of Sardinia, Victor Amadeus III., was waging war against the French Republic, the men of Turin were with difficulty kept from revolt; and, as we have seen, the Austro-Sardinian alliance was powerless to recover Savoy and Nice from the soldiers of liberty or to guard the Italian Riviera from invasion.

In fact, Bonaparte—for he henceforth spelt his name thus—detected the political weakness of the Hapsburgs' position in Italy. Masters of eleven distinct peoples north of the Alps, how could they hope permanently to dominate a wholly alien people south of that great mountain barrier? The many failures of the old Ghibelline or Imperial party in face of any popular impulse which moved the Italian nature to its depths revealed the artificiality of their rule. Might not such an impulse be imparted by the French Revolution? And would not the hopes of national freedom and of emancipation from feudal imposts fire these peoples with zeal for the French cause? Evidently there were vast possibilities in a democratic propaganda. At the outset Bonaparte's racial sympathies were warmly aroused for the liberation of

Italy; and though his judgment was to be warped by the promptings of ambition, he never lost sight of the welfare of the people whence he was descended. In his "Memoirs written at St. Helena" he summed up his convictions respecting the Peninsula in this statesman-like utterance: "Italy, isolated within its natural limits, separated by the sea and by very high mountains from the rest of Europe, seems called to be a great and powerful nation. . . . Unity in manners, language, literature ought finally, in a future more or less remote, to unite its inhabitants under a single government. . . . Rome is beyond doubt the capital which the Italians will one day choose." A prophetic saying: it came from a man who, as conqueror and organizer, awakened that people from the torpor of centuries and breathed into it something of his own indomitable energy.

And then again, the Austrian possessions south of the Alps were difficult to hold for purely military reasons. They were separated from Vienna by difficult mountain ranges through which armies struggled with difficulty. True, Mantua was a formidable stronghold, but no fortress could make the Milanese other than a weak and straggling territory, the retention of which by the Court of Vienna was a defiance to the gospel of nature of which Rousseau was the herald and Bonaparte the militant exponent.

The Austro-Sardinian forces were now occupying the pass which separates the Apennines from the Maritime Alps north of the town of Savona. They were accordingly near the headwaters of the Bormida and the Tanaro, two of the chief affluents of the River Po: and roads following those river valleys led, the one north-east, in the direction of Milan, the other north-west towards Turin, the Sardinian capital. A wedge of mountainous country separated these roads as they diverged from the neighbourhood of Montenotte. Here obviously was the vulnerable point of the Austro-Sardinian position. Here therefore Bonaparte purposed to deliver his first strokes, foreseeing that, should he sever the allies, he would have

in his favour every advantage both political and topographical.

All this was possible to a commander who could overcome the initial difficulties. But these difficulties were enormous. The position of the French Army of Italy in March, 1796, was precarious. Its detachments, echelonned near the coast from Savona to Loano, and thence to Nice, or inland to the Col di Tende, comprised in all 42,000 men, as against the Austro-Sardinian forces amounting to 52,000 men.[1] Moreover, the allies occupied strong positions on the northern slopes of the Maritime Alps and Apennines, and, holding the inner and therefore shorter curve, they could by a dextrous concentration have pushed their more widely scattered opponents on to the shore, where the republicans would have been harassed by the guns of the British cruisers. Finally, Bonaparte's troops were badly equipped, worse clad, and were not paid at all. On his arrival at Nice at the close of March, the young commander had to disband one battalion for mutinous conduct.[2] For a brief space it seemed doubtful how the army would receive this slim, delicate-looking youth, known hitherto only as a skilful artillerist at Toulon and in the streets of Paris. But he speedily gained the respect and confidence of the rank and file, not only by stern punishment of the mutineers, but by raising money from a local banker, so as to make good some of the long arrears of pay. Other grievances he rectified by prompt reorganization of the commissariat and kindred departments. But, above all, by his burning words he thrilled them: "Soldiers, you are half starved and half naked. The Government owes you much, but can do nothing for you. Your patience and courage are honourable to you, but they procure you neither advantage nor glory. I am about to lead you

[1] Koch, "Mémoires de Masséna," vol. ii., p. 13, credits the French with only 37,775 men present with the colours, the Austrians with 32,000, and the Sardinians with 20,000. All these figures omit the troops in garrison or guarding communications.

[2] Napoleon's "Correspondence," March 28th, 1796.

MAP TO ILLUSTRATE THE CAMPAIGNS IN NORTH ITALY.

into the most fertile valleys of the world: there you will find flourishing cities and teeming provinces: there you will reap honour, glory, and riches. Soldiers of the Army of Italy, will you lack courage?" Two years previously so open a bid for the soldiers' allegiance would have conducted any French commander forthwith to the guillotine. But much had changed since the days of Robespierre's supremacy; Spartan austerity had vanished; and the former insane jealousy of individual pre-eminence was now favouring a startling reaction which was soon to install the one supremely able man as absolute master of France.

Bonaparte's conduct produced a deep impression alike on troops and officers. From Masséna his energy and his trenchant orders extorted admiration: and the tall swaggering Augereau shrank beneath the intellectual superiority of his gaze. Moreover, at the beginning of April the French received reinforcements which raised their total to 49,300 men, and gave them a superiority of force; for though the allies had 52,000, yet they were so widely scattered as to be inferior in any one district. Besides, the Austrian commander, Beaulieu, was seventy-one years of age, had only just been sent into Italy, with which land he was ill acquainted, and found one-third of his troops down with sickness.[1]

Bonaparte now began to concentrate his forces near Savona. Fortune favoured him even before the campaign commenced. The snows of winter, still lying on the mountains, though thawing on the southern slopes, helped to screen his movements from the enemy's outposts; and the French vanguard pushed along the coastline even as far as Voltri. This movement was designed to coerce the Senate of Genoa into payment of a fine for its acquiescence in the seizure of a French vessel by a British cruiser within its neutral roadstead; but it served to alarm Beaulieu, who, breaking up his cantonments,

[1] See my articles on Colonel Graham's despatches from Italy in the "Eng. Hist. Review" of January and April, 1899.

sent a strong column towards that city. At the time this circumstance greatly annoyed Bonaparte, who had hoped to catch the Imperialists dozing in their winter quarters. Yet it is certain that the hasty move of their left flank towards Voltri largely contributed to that brilliant opening of Bonaparte's campaign, which his admirers have generally regarded as due solely to his genius.[1] For, when Beaulieu had thrust his column into the broken coast district between Genoa and Voltri, he severed it dangerously far from his centre, which marched up the valley of the eastern branch of the Bormida to occupy the passes of the Apennines north of Savona. This, again, was by no means in close touch with the Sardinian allies encamped further to the west in and beyond Ceva. Beaulieu, writing at a later date to Colonel Graham, the English *attaché* at his headquarters, ascribed his first disasters to Argenteau, his lieutenant at Montenotte, who employed only a third of the forces placed under his command. But division of forces was characteristic of the Austrians in all their operations, and they now gave a fine opportunity to any enterprising opponent who should crush their weak and unsupported centre. In obedience to orders from Vienna, Beaulieu assumed the offensive; but he brought his chief force to bear on the French vanguard at Voltri, which he drove in with some loss. While he was occupying Voltri, the boom of cannon echoing across the mountains warned his outposts that the real campaign

[1] Thus Mr. Sargent ("Bonaparte's First Campaign") says that Bonaparte was expecting Beaulieu to move on Genoa, and saw herein a chance of crushing the Austrian centre. But Bonaparte, in his despatch of April 6th to the Directory, referring to the French advance towards Genoa, writes: "J'ai été très fâché et extrêmement mécontent de ce mouvement sur Gênes, d'autant plus déplacé qu'il a obligé cette république à prendre une attitude hostile, et a réveillé l'ennemi que j'aurais pris tranquille: ce sont des hommes de plus qu'il nous en coûtera." For the question how far Napoleon was indebted to Marshal Maillebois' campaign of 1745 for his general design, see the brochure of M. Pierron. His indebtedness has been proved by M. Bouvier ("Bonaparte en Italie," p. 197) and by Mr. Wilkinson ("Owens Coll. Hist. Essays").

was opening in the broken country north of Savona.[1] There the weak Austrian centre had occupied a ridge or plateau above the village of Montenotte, through which ran the road leading to Alessandria and Milan. Argenteau's attack partly succeeded: but the stubborn bravery of a French detachment checked it before the redoubt which commanded the southern prolongation of the heights named Monte-Legino.[2]

Such was the position of affairs when Bonaparte hurried up. On the following day (April 12th), massing the French columns of attack under cover of an early morning mist, he moved them to their positions, so that the first struggling rays of sunlight revealed to the astonished Austrians the presence of an army ready to crush their front and turn their flanks. For a time the Imperialists struggled bravely against the superior forces in their front; but when Masséna pressed round their right wing, they gave way and beat a speedy retreat to save themselves from entire capture. Bonaparte took no active share in the battle: he was, very properly, intent on the wider problem of severing the Austrians

[1] Nelson was then endeavouring to cut off the vessels conveying stores from Toulon to the French forces. The following extracts from his despatches are noteworthy. January 6th, 1796: "If the French mean to carry on the war, they must penetrate into Italy. Holland and Flanders, with their own country, they have entirely stripped: Italy is the gold mine, and if once entered, is without the means of resistance." Then on April 28th, after Piedmont was overpowered by the French: "We English have to regret that we cannot always decide the fate of Empires on the Sea." Again, on May 16th: "I very much believe that England, who commenced the war with all Europe for her allies, will finish it by having nearly all Europe for her enemies."

[2] The picturesque story of the commander (who was not Rampon, but Fornésy) summoning the defenders of the central redoubt to swear on their colours and on the cannon that they would defend it to the death has been endlessly repeated by historians. But the documents which furnish the only authentic details show that there was in the redoubt no cannon and no flag. Fornésy's words simply were: "C'est ici, mes amis, qu'il faut vaincre ou mourir"—surely much grander than the histrionic oath. (See "Mémoires de Masséna," vol. ii.; "Pièces Just.," No. 3; also Bouvier, *op. cit.*)

from their allies, first by the turning movement of Masséna, and then by pouring other troops into the gap thus made. In this he entirely succeeded. The radical defects in the Austrian dispositions left them utterly unable to withstand the blows which he now showered upon them. The Sardinians were too far away on the west to help Argenteau in his hour of need: they were in and beyond Ceva, intent on covering the road to Turin: whereas, as Napoleon himself subsequently wrote, they should have been near enough to their allies to form one powerful army, which, at Dego or Montenotte, would have defended both Turin and Milan. "United, the two forces would have been superior to the French army: separated, they were lost."

The configuration of the ground favoured Bonaparte's plan of driving the Imperialists down the valley of the Bormida in a north-easterly direction; and the natural desire of a beaten general to fall back towards his base of supplies also impelled Beaulieu and Argenteau to retire towards Milan. But that would sever their connections with the Sardinians, whose base of supplies, Turin, lay in a north-westerly direction.

Bonaparte therefore hurled his forces at once against the Austrians and a Sardinian contingent at Millesimo, and defeated them, Augereau's division cutting off the retreat of twelve hundred of their men under Provera. Weakened by this second blow, the allies fell back on the intrenched village of Dego. Their position was of a strength proportionate to its strategic importance; for its loss would completely sever all connection between their two main armies save by devious routes many miles in their rear. They therefore clung desperately to the six mamelons and redoubts which barred the valley and dominated some of the neighbouring heights. Yet such was the superiority of the French in numbers that these positions were speedily turned by Masséna, whom Bonaparte again intrusted with the movement on the enemy's flank and rear. A strange event followed. The victors, while pillaging the country for the supplies

which Bonaparte's sharpest orders failed to draw from the magazines and stores on the sea-coast, were attacked in the dead of night by five Austrian battalions that had been ordered up to support their countrymen at Dego. These, after straying among the mountains, found themselves among bands of the marauding French, whom they easily scattered, seizing Dego itself. Apprised of this mishap, Bonaparte hurried up more troops from the rear, and on the 15th recovered the prize which had so nearly been snatched from his grasp. Had Beaulieu at this time thrown all his forces on the French, he might have retrieved his first misfortunes: but foresight and energy were not to be found at the Austrian headquarters: the surprise at Dego was the work of a colonel; and for many years to come the incompetence of their aged commanders was to paralyze the fine fighting qualities of the "white-coats." In three conflicts they had been outmanœuvred and outnumbered, and drew in their shattered columns to Acqui.

The French commander now led his columns westward against the Sardinians, who had fallen back on their fortified camp at Ceva, in the upper valley of the Tanaro. There they beat off one attack of the French. A check in front of a strongly intrenched position was serious. It might have led to a French disaster, had the Austrians been able to bring aid to their allies. Bonaparte even summoned a council of war to deliberate on the situation. As a rule, a council of war gives timid advice. This one strongly advised a second attack on the camp—a striking proof of the ardour which then nerved the republican generals. Not yet were they *condottieri* carving out fortunes by their swords: not yet were they the pampered minions of an autocrat, intent primarily on guarding the estates which his favour had bestowed. Timidity was rather the mark of their opponents. When the assault on the intrenchments of Ceva was about to be renewed, the Sardinian forces were discerned filing away westwards. Their general indulged the fond hope of holding the French at bay at several

strong natural positions on his march. He was bitterly to rue his error. The French divisions of Sérurier and Dommartin closed in on him, drove him from Mondovi, and away towards Turin.

Bonaparte had now completely succeeded. Using to the full the advantage of his central position between the widely scattered detachments of his foes, he had struck vigorously at their natural point of junction, Montenotte, and by three subsequent successes—for the evacuation of Ceva can scarcely be called a French victory—had forced them further and further apart until Turin was almost within his power.

It now remained to push these military triumphs to their natural conclusion, and impose terms of peace on the House of Savoy, which was secretly desirous of peace. The Directors had ordered Bonaparte that he should seek to detach Sardinia from the Austrian alliance by holding out the prospect of a valuable compensation for the loss of Savoy and Nice in the fertile Milanese.[1] The prospect of this rich prize would, the Directors surmised, dissolve the Austro-Sardinian alliance, as soon as the allies had felt the full vigour of the French arms. Not that Bonaparte himself was to conduct these negotiations. He was to forward to the Directory all offers of submission. Nay, he was not empowered to grant on his own responsibility even an armistice. He was merely to push the foe hard, and feed his needy soldiers on the conquered territory. He was to be solely a general, never a negotiator.

The Directors herein showed keen jealousy or striking ignorance of military affairs. How could he keep the Austrians quiet while envoys passed between Turin and Paris? All the dictates of common sense required him to grant an armistice to the Court of Turin before the Austrians could recover from their recent disasters. But the King of Sardinia drew him from a perplexing situation by instructing Colli to make overtures for an armistice as

[1] Jomini, vol. viii., p. 340; "Pièces Justifs."

preliminary to a peace. At once the French commander replied that such powers belonged to the Directory; but as for an armistice, it would only be possible if the Court of Turin placed in his hands three fortresses, Coni, Tortona, and Alessandria, besides guaranteeing the transit of French armies through Piedmont and the passage of the Po at Valenza. Then, with his unfailing belief in accomplished facts, Bonaparte pushed on his troops to Cherasco.

Near that town he received the Piedmontese envoys; and from the pen of one of them we have an account of the general's behaviour in his first essay in diplomacy. His demeanour was marked by that grave and frigid courtesy which was akin to Piedmontese customs. In reply to the suggestions of the envoys that some of the conditions were of little value to the French, he answered: "The Republic, in intrusting to me the command of an army, has credited me with possessing enough discernment to judge of what that army requires, without having recourse to the advice of my enemy." Apart, however, from this sarcasm, which was uttered in a hard and biting voice, his tone was coldly polite. He reserved his home thrust for the close of the conference. When it had dragged on till considerably after noon with no definite result, he looked at his watch and exclaimed: "Gentlemen, I warn you that a general attack is ordered for two o'clock, and that if I am not assured that Coni will be put in my hands before nightfall, the attack will not be postponed for one moment. It may happen to me to lose battles, but no one shall ever see me lose minutes either by over-confidence or by sloth." The terms of the armistice of Cherasco were forthwith signed (April 28th); they were substantially the same as those first offered by the victor. During the luncheon which followed, the envoys were still further impressed by his imperturbable confidence and trenchant phrases; as when he told them that the campaign was the exact counterpart of what he had planned in 1794; or described a council of war as a convenient device for covering cowardice or irresolution

in the commander; or asserted that nothing could now stop him before the walls of Mantua.[1]

As a matter of fact, the French army was at that time so disorganized by rapine as scarcely to have withstood a combined and vigorous attack by Beaulieu and Colli. The republicans, long exposed to hunger and privations, were now revelling in the fertile plains of Piedmont. Large bands of marauders ranged the neighbouring country, and the regiments were often reduced to mere companies. From the grave risks of this situation Bonaparte was rescued by the timidity of the Court of Turin, which signed the armistice at Cherasco eighteen days after the commencement of the campaign. A fortnight later the preliminaries of peace were signed between France and the King of Sardinia, by which the latter yielded up his provinces of Savoy and Nice, and renounced the alliance with Austria. Great indignation was felt in the Imperialist camp at this news; and it was freely stated that the Piedmontese had let themselves be beaten in order to compass a peace that had been tacitly agreed upon in the month of January.[2]

Even before this auspicious event, Bonaparte's despatches to the Directors were couched in almost imperious terms, which showed that he felt himself the master of the situation. He advised them as to their policy towards Sardinia, pointing out that, as Victor Amadeus had yielded up three important fortresses, he was practically in the hands of the French: "If you do not accept peace with him, if your plan is to dethrone him, you must amuse him for a few decades[3] and must warn me: I then seize Valenza and march on Turin." In military affairs the young general showed that he would brook no interference from Paris. He requested the Directory to draft 15,000 men from Kellermann's

[1] "Un Homme d'autrefois," par Costa de Beauregard.

[2] These were General Beaulieu's words to Colonel Graham on May 22nd.

[3] Periods of ten days, which, in the revolutionary calendar, superseded the week.

Army of the Alps to reinforce him: "That will give me an army of 45,000 men, of which possibly I may send a part to Rome. If you continue your confidence and approve these plans, I am sure of success: Italy is yours." Somewhat later, the Directors proposed to grant the required reinforcements, but stipulated for the retention of part of the army in the Milanese *under the command of Kellermann.* Thereupon Bonaparte replied (May 14th) that, as the Austrians had been reinforced, it was highly impolitic to divide the command. Each general had his own way of making war. Kellermann, having more experience, would doubtless do it better: but both together would do it very badly.

Again the Directors had blundered. In seeking to subject Bonaparte to the same rules as had been imposed on all French generals since the treason of Dumouriez in 1793, they were doubtless consulting the vital interests of the Commonwealth. But, while striving to avert all possibilities of Cæsarism, they now sinned against that elementary principle of strategy which requires unity of design in military operations. Bonaparte's retort was unanswerable, and nothing more was heard of the luckless proposal.

Meanwhile the peace with the House of Savoy had thrown open the Milanese to Bonaparte's attack. Holding three Sardinian fortresses, he had an excellent base of operations; for the lands restored to the King of Sardinia were to remain subject to requisitions for the French army until the general peace. The Austrians, on the other hand, were weakened by the hostility of their Italian subjects, and, worst of all, they depended ultimately on reinforcements drawn from beyond the Alps by way of Mantua. In the rich plains of Lombardy they, however, had one advantage which was denied to them among the rocks of the Apennines. Their generals could display the tactical skill on which they prided themselves, and their splendid cavalry had some chance of emulating the former exploits of the Hungarian and Croatian horse. They therefore awaited the onset of

the French, little dismayed by recent disasters, and animated by the belief that their antagonist, unversed in regular warfare, would at once lose in the plains the bubble reputation gained in ravines. But the country in the second part of this campaign was not less favourable to Bonaparte's peculiar gifts than that in which he had won his first laurels as commander. Amidst the Apennines, where only small bodies of men could be moved, a general inexperienced in the handling of cavalry and infantry could make his first essays in tactics with fair chances of success. Speed, energy, and the prompt seizure of a commanding central position were the prime requisites; the handling of vast masses of men was impossible. The plains of Lombardy facilitated larger movements; but even here the numerous broad swift streams fed by the Alpine snows, and the network of irrigating dykes, favoured the designs of a young and daring leader who saw how to use natural obstacles so as to baffle and ensnare his foes. Bonaparte was now to show that he excelled his enemies, not only in quickness of eye and vigour of intellect, but also in the minutiæ of tactics and in those larger strategic conceptions which decide the fate of nations. In the first place, having the superiority of force, he was able to attack. This is an advantage at all times: for the aggressor can generally mislead his adversary by a series of feints until the real blow can be delivered with crushing effect. Such has been the aim of all great leaders from the time of Epaminondas and Alexander, Hannibal and Cæsar, down to the age of Luxembourg, Marlborough, and Frederick the Great. Aggressive tactics were particularly suited to the French soldiery, always eager, active, and intelligent, and now endowed with boundless enthusiasm in their cause and in their leader.

Then again he was fully aware of the inherent vice of the Austrian situation. It was as if an unwieldy organism stretched a vulnerable limb across the huge barrier of the Alps, exposing it to the attack of a com-

pacter body. It only remained for Bonaparte to turn against his foes the smaller geographical features on which they too implicitly relied. Beaulieu had retired beyond the Po and the Ticino, expecting that the attack on the Milanese would be delivered across the latter stream by the ordinary route, which crossed it at Pavia. Near that city the Austrians occupied a strong position with 26,000 men, while other detachments patrolled the banks of the Ticino further north, and those of the Po towards Valenza, only 5,000 men being sent towards Piacenza. Bonaparte, however, was not minded to take the ordinary route He determined to march, not as yet on the north of the River Po, where snow-swollen streams coursed down from the Alps, but rather on the south side, where the Apennines throw off fewer streams and also of smaller volume. From the fortress of Tortona he could make a rush at Piacenza, cross the Po there, and thus gain the Milanese almost without a blow. To this end he had stipulated in the recent terms of peace that he might cross the Po at Valenza; and now, amusing his foes by feints on that side, he vigorously pushed his main columns along the southern bank of the Po, where they gathered up all the available boats. The vanguard, led by the impetuous Lannes, seized the ferry at Piacenza, before the Austrian horse appeared, and scattered a squadron or two which strove to drive them back into the river (May 7th).

Time was thus gained for a considerable number of French to cross the river in boats or by the ferry. Working under the eye of their leader, the French conquered all obstacles: a bridge of boats soon spanned the stream, and was defended by a *tête de pont;* and with forces about equal in number to Liptay's Austrians, the republicans advanced northwards, and, after a tough struggle, dislodged their foes from the village of Fombio. This success drove a solid wedge between Liptay and his commander-in-chief, who afterwards bitterly blamed him, first for retreating, and secondly for not reporting his retreat to headquarters.

THE PASSAGE OF THE ADDA AT LODI, MAY 10TH, 1796.

From an etched plate after a drawing by Carle Vernet.

It would appear, however, that Liptay had only 5,000 men (not the 8,000 which Napoleon and French historians have credited to him), that he was sent by Beaulieu to Piacenza too late to prevent the crossing by the French, and that at the close of the fight on the following day he was completely cut off from communicating with his superior. Beaulieu, with his main force, advanced on Fombio, stumbled on the French, where he looked to find Liptay, and after a confused fight succeeded in disengaging himself and withdrawing towards Lodi, where the high-road leading to Mantua crossed the River Adda. To that stream he directed his remaining forces to retire. He thereby left Milan uncovered (except for the garrison which held the citadel), and abandoned more than the half of Lombardy; but, from the military point of view, his retreat to the Adda was thoroughly sound. Yet here again a movement strategically correct was marred by tactical blunders. Had he concentrated all his forces at the nearest point of the Adda which the French could cross, namely Pizzighetone, he would have rendered any flank march of theirs to the northward extremely hazardous; but he had not yet sufficiently learned from his terrible teacher the need of concentration; and, having at least three passages to guard, he kept his forces too spread out to oppose a vigorous move against any one of them. Indeed, he despaired of holding the line of the Adda, and retired eastwards with a great part of his army.

Consequently, when Bonaparte, only three days after the seizure of Piacenza, threw his almost undivided force against the town of Lodi, his passage was disputed only by the rearguard, whose anxiety to cover the retreat of a belated detachment far exceeded their determination to defend the bridge over the Adda. This was a narrow structure, some eighty fathoms long, standing high above the swift but shallow river. Resolutely held by well-massed troops and cannon, it might have cost the French a severe struggle: but the Imperialists were badly handled: some were posted in and around the

town which was between the river and the advancing French; and the weak walls of Lodi were soon escaladed by the impetuous republicans. The Austrian commander, Sebottendorf, now hastily ranged his men along the eastern bank of the river, so as to defend the bridge and prevent any passage of the river by boats or by a ford above the town. The Imperialists numbered only 9,627 men; they were discouraged by defeats and by the consciousness that no serious stand could be attempted before they reached the neighbourhood of Mantua; and their efforts to break down the bridge were now frustrated by the French, who, posted behind the walls of Lodi on the higher bank of the stream, swept their opponents' position with a searching artillery fire. Having shaken the constancy of his foes and refreshed his own infantry by a brief rest in Lodi, Bonaparte at 6 p.m. secretly formed a column of his choicest troops and hurled it against the bridge. A hot fire of grapeshot and musketry tore its front, and for a time the column bent before the iron hail. But, encouraged by the words of their young leader, generals, corporals, and grenadiers pressed home their charge. This time, aided by sharp-shooters who waded to islets in the river, the assailants cleared the bridge, bayoneted the Austrian cannoneers, attacked the first and second lines of supporting foot, and, when reinforced, compelled horse and foot to retreat towards Mantua.[1]

Such was the affair of Lodi (May 10th). A legendary

[1] I have followed the accounts given by Jomini, vol. viii., pp. 120-130; that by Schels in the "Oest. Milit. Zeitschrift" for 1825, vol. ii.; also Bouvier "Bonaparte en Italie," ch. xiii.; and J. G.'s "Etudes sur la Campagne de 1796-97." Most French accounts, being based on Napoleon's "Mémoires," vol. iii., p. 212 *et seq.*, are a tissue of inaccuracies. Bonaparte affected to believe that at Lodi he defeated an army of sixteen thousand men. Thiers states that the French cavalry, after fording the river at Montanasso, influenced the result: but the official report of May 11th, 1796, expressly states that the French horse could not cross the river at that place till the fight was over. See too Desvernois, "Mems.," ch. vii.

glamour hovers around all the details of this conflict and invests it with fictitious importance. Beaulieu's main force was far away, and there was no hope of entrapping anything more than the rear of his army. Moreover, if this were the object, why was not the flank move of the French cavalry above Lodi pushed home earlier in the fight? This, if supported by infantry, could have outflanked the enemy while the perilous rush was made against the bridge; and such a turning movement would probably have enveloped the Austrian force while it was being shattered in front. That is the view in which the strategist, Clausewitz, regards this encounter. Far different was the impression which it created among the soldiers and Frenchmen at large. They valued a commander more for bravery of the bull-dog type than for any powers of reasoning and subtle combination. These, it is true, Bonaparte had already shown. He now enchanted the soldiery by dealing a straight sharp blow. It had a magical effect on their minds. On the evening of that day the French soldiers, with antique republican *camaraderie*, saluted their commander as *le petit caporal* for his personal bravery in the fray, and this endearing phrase helped to immortalize the affair of the bridge of Lodi.[1] It shot a thrill of exultation through France. With pardonable exaggeration, men told how he charged at the head of the column, and, with Lannes, was the first to reach the opposite side; and later generations have figured him charging before his tall grenadiers—a feat that was actually performed by Lannes, Berthier, Masséna, Cervoni, and Dallemagne. It was all one. Bonaparte alone was the hero of the day. He reigned supreme in the hearts of the soldiers, and he saw the importance of this conquest. At St. Helena he confessed to Montholon that it was the victory of Lodi which fanned his ambition into a steady flame.

A desire of stimulating popular enthusiasm throughout Italy impelled the young victor to turn away from his real objective, the fortress of Mantua, to the political

[1] Bouvier (p. 533) traces this story to Las Cases and discredits it.

capital of Lombardy. The people of Milan hailed their French liberators with enthusiasm: they rained flowers on the bronzed soldiers of liberty, and pointed to their tattered uniforms and worn-out shoes as proofs of their triumphant energy: above all, they gazed with admiration, not unmixed with awe, at the thin pale features of the young commander, whose plain attire bespoke a Spartan activity, whose ardent gaze and decisive gestures proclaimed a born leader of men. Forthwith he arranged for the investment of the citadel where eighteen hundred Austrians held out: he then received the chief men of the city with easy Italian grace; and in the evening he gave a sumptuous ball, at which all the dignity, wealth, and beauty of the old Lombard capital shone resplendent. For a brief space all went well between the Lombards and their liberators. He received with flattering distinction the chief artists and men of letters, and also sought to quicken the activity of the University of Pavia. Political clubs and newspapers multiplied throughout Lombardy; and actors, authors, and editors joined in a pæan of courtly or fawning praise, to the new Scipio, Cæsar, Hannibal, and Jupiter.

There were other reasons why the Lombards should worship the young victor. Apart from the admiration which a gifted race ever feels for so fascinating a combination of youthful grace with intellectual power and martial prowess, they believed that this Italian hero would call the people to political activity, perchance even to national independence. For this their most ardent spirits had sighed, conspired, or fought during the eighty-three years of the Austrian occupation. Ever since the troublous times of Dante there had been prophetic souls who caught the vision of a new Italy, healed of her countless schisms, purified from her social degradations, and uniting the prowess of her ancient life with the gentler arts of the present for the perfection of her own powers and for the welfare of mankind. The gleam of this vision had shone forth even amidst the thunder claps of the French Revolution; and now that the storm

THE ENTRY OF THE FRENCH INTO MILAN, MAY, 1796.

had burst over the plains of Lombardy, ecstatic youths seemed to see the vision embodied in the person of Bonaparte himself. At the first news of the success at Lodi the national colours were donned as cockades, or waved defiance from balconies and steeples to the Austrian garrisons. All truly Italian hearts believed that the French victories heralded the dawn of political freedom not only for Lombardy, but for the whole peninsula.

Bonaparte's first actions increased these hopes. He abolished the Austrian machinery of government, excepting the Council of State, and approved the formation of provisional municipal councils and of a National Guard. At the same time, he wrote guardedly to the Directors at Paris, asking whether they proposed to organize Lombardy as a republic, as it was much more ripe for this form of government than Piedmont. Further than this he could not go; but at a later date he did much to redeem his first promises to the people of Northern Italy.

The fair prospect was soon overclouded by the financial measures urged on the young commander from Paris, measures which were disastrous to the Lombards and degrading to the liberators themselves. The Directors had recently bidden him to press hard on the Milanese, and levy large contributions in money, provisions, and objects of art, seeing that they did not intend to keep this country.[1] Bonaparte accordingly issued a proclamation (May 19th), imposing on Lombardy the sum of twenty million francs, remarking that it was a very light sum for so fertile a country. Only two days before he had in a letter to the Directors described it as exhausted by five years of war. As for the assertion that the army needed this sum, it may be compared with his private notification to the Directory, three days after his proclamation, that they might speedily count on six to eight millions of the Lombard contribution, as lying

[1] Directorial despatch of May 7th, 1796. The date rebuts the statement of M. Aulard, in M. Lavisse's recent volume, "La Révolution Française," p. 435, that Bonaparte suggested to the Directory the pillage of Lombardy.

ready at their disposal, "it being over and above what the army requires." This is the first definite suggestion by Bonaparte of that system of bleeding conquered lands for the benefit of the French Exchequer, which enabled him speedily to gain power over the Directors. Thenceforth they began to connive at his diplomatic irregularities, and even to urge on his expeditions into wealthy districts, provided that the spoils went to Paris; while the conqueror, on his part, was able tacitly to assume that tone of authority with which the briber treats the bribed.[1]

The exaction of this large sum, and of various requisites for the army, as well as the "extraction" of works of art for the benefit of French museums, at once aroused the bitterest feelings. The loss of priceless treasures, such as the manuscript of Virgil which had belonged to Petrarch, and the masterpieces of Raphael and Leonardo da Vinci, might perhaps have been borne: it concerned only the cultured few, and their effervescence was soon quelled by patrols of French cavalry. Far different was it with the peasants between Milan and Pavia. Drained by the white-coats, they now refused to be bled for the benefit of the blue-coats of France. They rushed to arms. The city of Pavia defied the attack of a French column until cannon battered in its gates. Then the republicans rushed in, massacred all the armed men for some hours, and glutted their lust and rapacity. By order of Bonaparte, the members of the municipal council were condemned to execution; but a delay occurred before this ferocious order was carried out, and it was subsequently mitigated. Two hundred hostages were, however, sent away into France as a guarantee for the good behaviour of the unfortunate city: whereupon the chief announced to the Directory that this would serve as a useful lesson to the peoples of Italy.

In one sense this was correct. It gave the Italians a true insight into French methods; and painful emotions thrilled the peoples of the peninsula when they realized

[1] "Corresp.," June 6th, 1797.

at what a price their liberation was to be effected. Yet it is unfair to lay the chief blame on Bonaparte for the pillage of Lombardy. His actions were only a development of existing revolutionary customs; but never had these demoralizing measures been so thoroughly enforced as in the present system of liberation and blackmail. Lombardy was ransacked with an almost Vandal rapacity. Bonaparte desired little for himself. His aim ever was power rather than wealth. Riches he valued only as a means to political supremacy. But he took care to place the Directors and all his influential officers deeply in his debt. To the five *soi-disant* rulers of France he sent one hundred horses, the finest that could be found in Lombardy, to replace "the poor creatures which now draw your carriages";[1] to his officers his indulgence was passive, but usually effective. Marmont states that Bonaparte once reproached him for his scrupulousness in returning the whole of a certain sum which he had been commissioned to recover. "At that time," says Marmont, "we still retained a flower of delicacy on these subjects." This Alpine gentian was soon to fade in the heats of the plains. Some generals made large fortunes, eminently so Masséna, first in plunder as in the fray. And yet the commander, who was so lenient to his generals, filled his letters to the Directory with complaints about the cloud of French commissioners, dealers, and other civilian harpies who battened on the spoil of Lombardy. It seems impossible to avoid the conclusion that this indulgence towards the soldiers and severity towards civilians was the result of a fixed determination to link indissolubly to his fortunes the generals and rank and file. The contrast in his behaviour was often startling. Some of the civilians he imprisoned: others he desired to shoot; but as the hardiest robbers had generally made to themselves friends of the military mammon of unrighteousness, they escaped with a fine ridiculously out of proportion to their actual gains.[2]

[1] "Corresp.," June 1st, 1796.
[2] Gaffarel, "Bonaparte et les Républiques Italiennes," p. 22.

The Dukes of Parma and Modena were also mulcted. The former of these, owing to his relationship with the Spanish Bourbons, with whom the Directory desired to remain on friendly terms, was subjected to the fine of merely two million francs and twenty masterpieces of art, these last to be selected by French commissioners from the galleries of the duchy; but the Duke of Modena, who had assisted the Austrian arms, purchased his pardon by an indemnity of ten million francs, and by the cession of twenty pictures, the chief artistic treasures of his States.[1] As Bonaparte naïvely stated to the Directors, the duke had no fortresses or guns; consequently these could not be demanded from him.

From this degrading work Bonaparte strove to wean his soldiers by recalling them to their nobler work of carrying on the enfranchisement of Italy. In a proclamation (May 20th) which even now stirs the blood like a trumpet call, he bade his soldiers remember that, though much had been done, a far greater task yet awaited them. Posterity must not reproach them for having found their Capua in Lombardy. Rome was to be freed: the Eternal City was to renew her youth and show again the virtues of her ancient worthies, Brutus and Scipio. Then France would give a glorious peace to Europe; then their fellow-citizens would say of each champion of liberty as he returned to his hearth: "He was of the Army of Italy." By such stirring words did he entwine with the love of liberty that passion for military glory which was destined to strangle the Republic.

Meanwhile the Austrians had retired behind the banks of the Mincio and the walls of its guardian fortress, Mantua. Their position was one of great strength. The river, which carries off the surplus waters of Lake Garda, joins the River Po after a course of some thirty miles. Along with the tongue-like cavity occupied by its parent lake, the river forms the chief inner barrier to all invaders of Italy. From the earliest times down to those

[1] "Corresp.," May 17th, 1796.

of the two Napoleons, the banks of the Mincio have witnessed many of the contests which have decided the fortunes of the peninsula. On its lower course, where the river widens out into a semicircular lagoon flanked by marshes and backwaters, is the historic town of Mantua. For this position, if we may trust the picturesque lines of Mantua's noblest son,[1] the three earliest races of Northern Italy had striven; and when the power of imperial Rome was waning, the fierce Attila pitched his camp on the banks of the Mincio, and there received the pontiff Leo, whose prayers and dignity averted the threatening torrent of the Scythian horse.

It was by this stream, famed in war as in song, that the Imperialists now halted their shattered forces, awaiting reinforcements from Tyrol. These would pass down the valley of the Adige, and in the last part of their march would cross the lands of the Venetian Republic. For this action there was a long-established right of way, which did not involve a breach of the neutrality of Venice. But, as some of the Austrian troops had straggled on to the Venetian territory south of Brescia, the French commander had no hesitation in openly violating Venetian neutrality by the occupation of that town (May 26th). Augereau's division was also ordered to push on towards the west shore of Lake Garda, and there collect boats as if a crossing were intended. Seeing this, the Austrians seized the small Venetian fortress of Peschiera, which commands the exit of the Mincio from the lake, and Venetian neutrality was thenceforth wholly disregarded.

By adroit moves on the borders of the lake, Bonaparte now sought to make Beaulieu nervous about his communications with Tyrol through the river valley of the Adige; he completely succeeded: seeking to guard the important positions on that river between Rivoli and Roveredo, Beaulieu so weakened his forces on the Mincio, that at Borghetto and Valeggio he had only two battalions and ten squadrons of horse, or about two thousand

[1] Virgil, Æneid, x. 200.

men. Lannes' grenadiers, therefore, had little difficulty in forcing a passage on May 30th, whereupon Beaulieu withdrew to the upper Adige, highly satisfied with himself for having victualled the fortress of Mantua so that it could withstand a long siege. This was, practically, his sole achievement in the campaign. Outnumbered, outgeneralled, bankrupt in health as in reputation, he soon resigned his command, but not before he had given signs of "downright dotage."[1] He had, however, achieved immortality: his incapacity threw into brilliant relief the genius of his young antagonist, and therefore appreciably affected the fortunes of Italy and of Europe.

Bonaparte now despatched Masséna's division northwards, to coop up the Austrians in the narrow valley of the upper Adige, while other regiments began to close in on Mantua. The peculiarities of the ground favoured its investment. The semicircular lagoon which guards Mantua on the north, and the marshes on the south side, render an assault very difficult; but they also limit the range of ground over which sorties can be made, thereby lightening the work of the besiegers; and during part of the blockade Napoleon left fewer than five thousand men for this purpose. It was clear, however, that the reduction of Mantua would be a tedious undertaking, such as Bonaparte's daring and enterprising genius could ill brook, and that his cherished design of marching northwards to effect a junction with Moreau on the Danube was impossible. Having only 40,400 men with him at midsummer, he had barely enough to hold the line of the Adige, to blockade Mantua, and to keep open his communications with France.

At the command of the Directory he turned southward against feebler foes. The relations between the Papal States and the French Republic had been hostile since the assassination of the French envoy, Basseville, at Rome, in the early days of 1793; but the Pope, Pius VI., had confined himself to anathemas against the revolutionists and prayers for the success of the First Coalition.

[1] Colonel Graham's despatches.

This conduct now drew upon him a sharp blow. French troops crossed the Po and seized Bologna, whereupon the terrified cardinals signed an armistice with the republican commander, agreeing to close all their States to the English, and to admit a French garrison to the port of Ancona. The Pope also consented to yield up "one hundred pictures, busts, vases, or statues, as the French Commissioners shall determine, among which shall especially be included the bronze bust of Junius Brutus and the marble bust of Marcus Brutus, together with five hundred manuscripts." He was also constrained to pay 15,500,000 francs, besides animals and goods such as the French agents should requisition for their army, exclusive of the money and materials drawn from the districts of Bologna and Ferrara. The grand total, in money, and in kind, raised from the Papal States in this profitable raid, was reckoned by Bonaparte himself as 34,700,000 francs,[1] or about £1,400,000—a liberal assessment for the life of a single envoy and the *bruta fulmina* of the Vatican.

Equally lucrative was a dash into Tuscany. As the Grand Duke of this fertile land had allowed English cruisers and merchants certain privileges at Leghorn, this was taken as a departure from the neutrality which he ostensibly maintained since the signature of a treaty of peace with France in 1795. A column of the republicans now swiftly approached Leghorn and seized much valuable property from British merchants. Yet the invaders failed to secure the richest of the hoped-for plunder; for about forty English merchantmen sheered off from shore as the troops neared the seaport, and an English frigate, swooping down, carried off two French vessels almost under the eyes of Bonaparte himself. This last outrage gave, it is true, a slight excuse for the levying of requisitions in Leghorn and its environs; yet, according to the memoir-writer, Miot de Melito, this unprincipled action must be attributed not to Bonaparte, but to the urgent needs of the French treasury and the

[1] "Corresp.," June 26th, 1796.

personal greed of some of the Directors. Possibly also the French commissioners and agents, who levied blackmail or selected pictures, may have had some share in the shaping of the Directorial policy: at least, it is certain that some of them, notably Salicetti, amassed a large fortune from the plunder of Leghorn. In order to calm the resentment of the Grand Duke, Bonaparte paid a brief visit to Florence. He was received in respectful silence as he rode through the streets where his ancestors had schemed for the Ghibelline cause. By a deft mingling of courtesy and firmness the new conqueror imposed his will on the Government of Florence, and then sped northward to press on the siege of Mantua.

CHAPTER VI

THE FIGHTS FOR MANTUA

THE circumstances which recalled Bonaparte to the banks of the Mincio were indeed serious. The Emperor Francis was determined at all costs to retain his hold on Italy by raising the siege of that fortress; and unless the French commander could speedily compass its fall, he had the prospect of fighting a greatly superior army while his rear was threatened by the garrison of Mantua. Austria was making unparalleled efforts to drive this presumptuous young general from a land which she regarded as her own political preserve. Military historians have always been puzzled to account for her persistent efforts in 1796-7 to re-conquer Lombardy. But, in truth, the reasons are diplomatic, not military, and need not be detailed here. Suffice it to say that, though the Hapsburg lands in Swabia were threatened by Moreau's Army of the Rhine, Francis determined at all costs to recover his Italian possessions.

To this end the Emperor now replaced the luckless Beaulieu by General Würmser, who had gained some reputation in the Rhenish campaigns; and, detaching 25,000 men from his northern armies to strengthen his army on the Adige, he bade him carry the double-headed eagle of Austria victoriously into the plains of Italy. Though too late to relieve the citadel of Milan, he was to strain every nerve to relieve Mantua; and, since the latest reports represented the French as widely dispersed for the plunder of Central Italy, the Emperor indulged the highest hopes of Würmser's success.[1] Pos-

[1] Despatch of Francis to Würmser, July 14th, 1796.

sibly this might have been attained had the Austrian Emperor and staff understood the absolute need of concentration in attacking a commander who had already demonstrated its supreme importance in warfare Yet the difficulties of marching an army of 47,000 men through the narrow defile carved by the Adige through the Tyrolese Alps, and the wide extent of the French covering lines, led to the adoption of a plan which favoured rapidity at the expense of security. Würmser was to divide his forces for the difficult march southward from Tyrol into Italy. In defence of this arrangement much could be urged. To have cumbered the two roads, which run on either side of the Adige from Trient towards Mantua, with infantry, cavalry, artillery, and the countless camp-followers, animals, and wagons that follow an army, would have been fatal alike to speed of marching and to success in mountain warfare. Even in the campaign of 1866 the greatest commander of this generation carried out his maxim, "March in separate columns: unite for fighting." But Würmser and the Aulic Council[1] at Vienna neglected to insure that reunion for attack, on which von Moltke laid such stress in his Bohemian campaign. The Austrian forces in 1796 were divided by obstacles which could not quickly be crossed, namely, by Lake Garda and the lofty mountains which tower above the valley of the Adige. Assuredly the Imperialists were not nearly strong enough to run any risks. The official Austrian returns show that the total force assembled in Tyrol for the invasion of Italy amounted to 46,937 men, not to the 60,000 as pictured by the imagination of Thiers and other French historians. As Bonaparte had in Lombardy-Venetia fully 45,000 men (including 10,000 now

[1] Jomini (vol. viii., p. 305) blames Weyrother, the chief of Würmser's staff, for the plan. Jomini gives the precise figures of the French on July 25th: Masséna had 15,000 men on the upper Adige; Augereau, 5,000 near Legnago; Sauret, 4,000 at Salo; Sérurier, 10,500 near Mantua; and with others at and near Peschiera the total fighting strength was 45,000. So "J. G.," p. 103.

engaged in the siege of Mantua), scattered along a front of fifty miles from Milan to Brescia and Legnago, the incursion of Würmser's force, if the French were held to their separate positions by diversions against their flanks, must have proved decisive. But the fault was committed of so far dividing the Austrians that nowhere could they deal a crushing blow. Quosdanovich with 17,600 men was to take the western side of Lake Garda, seize the French magazines at Brescia, and cut their communications with Milan and France: the main body under Würmser, 24,300 strong, was meanwhile to march in two columns on either bank of the Adige, drive the French from Rivoli and push on towards Mantua: and yet a third division, led by Davidovich from the district of Friuli on the east, received orders to march on Vicenza and Legnago, in order to distract the French from that side, and possibly relieve Mantua if the other two onsets failed.

Faulty as these dispositions were, they yet seriously disconcerted Bonaparte. He was at Montechiaro, a village situated on the road between Brescia and Mantua, when, on July 29th, he heard that the white-coats had driven in Masséna's vanguard above Rivoli on the Adige, were menacing other positions near Verona and Legnago, and were advancing on Brescia. As soon as the full extent of the peril was manifest, he sent off ten despatches to his generals, ordering a concentration of troops—these, of course, fighting so as to delay the pursuit—towards the southern end of Lake Garda. This wise step probably saved his isolated forces from disaster. It was at that point that the Austrians proposed to unite their two chief columns and crush the French detachments. But, by drawing in the divisions of Masséna and Augereau towards the Mincio, Bonaparte speedily assembled a formidable array, and held the central position between the eastern and western divisions of the Imperialists. He gave up the important defensive line of the Adige, it is true; but by promptly rallying on the Mincio, he occupied a base that was defended on

the north by the small fortress of Peschiera and the waters of Lake Garda. Holding the bridges over the Mincio, he could strike at his assailants wherever they should attack; above all, he still covered the siege of Mantua. Such were his dispositions on July 29th and 30th. On the latter day he heard of the loss of Brescia, and the consequent cutting of his communications with Milan. Thereupon he promptly ordered Sérurier, who was besieging Mantua, to make a last vigorous effort to take that fortress, but also to assure his retreat westwards if fortune failed him. Later in the day he ordered him forthwith to send away his siege-train, throwing into the lake or burying whatever he could not save from the advancing Imperialists.

This apparently desperate step, which seemed to forebode the abandonment not only of the siege of Mantua, but of the whole of Lombardy, was in reality a masterstroke. Bonaparte had perceived the truth, which the campaigns of 1813 and 1870 were abundantly to illustrate—that the possession of fortresses, and consequently their siege by an invader, is of secondary importance when compared with a decisive victory gained in the open. When menaced by superior forces advancing towards the south of Lake Garda, he saw that he must sacrifice his siege works, even his siege-train, in order to gain for a few precious days that superiority in the field which the division of the Imperialist columns still left to him.

The dates of these occurrences deserve close scrutiny; for they suffice to refute some of the exorbitant claims made at a later time by General Augereau, that only his immovable firmness forced Bonaparte to fight and to change his dispositions of retreat into an attack which re-established everything. This extraordinary assertion, published by Augereau after he had deserted Napoleon in 1814, is accompanied by a detailed recital of the events of July 30th-August 5th, in which Bonaparte appears as the dazed and discouraged commander, surrounded by pusillanimous generals, and urged on to

fight solely by the confidence of Augereau. That the forceful energy of this general had a great influence in restoring the *morale* of the French army in the confused and desperate movements which followed may freely be granted. But his claims to have been the main spring of the French movements in those anxious days deserve a brief examination. He asserts that Bonaparte, "devoured by anxieties," met him at Roverbella late in the evening of July 30th, and spoke of retiring beyond the River Po. The official correspondence disproves this assertion. Bonaparte had already given orders to Sérurier to retire beyond the Po with his artillery train; but this was obviously an attempt to save it from the advancing Austrians; and the commander had ordered the northern part of the French besieging force to join Augereau between Roverbella and Goito. Augereau further asserts that, after he had roused Bonaparte to the need of a dash to recover Brescia, the commander-in-chief remarked to Berthier, "In that case we must raise the siege of Mantua," which again he (Augereau) vigorously opposed. This second statement is creditable neither to Augereau's accuracy nor to his sagacity. The order for the raising of the siege had been issued, and it was entirely necessary for the concentration of French troops, on which Bonaparte now relied as his only hope against superior force. Had Bonaparte listened to Augereau's advice and persisted still in besieging Mantua, the scattered French forces must have been crushed in detail. Augereau's words are those of a mere fighter, not of a strategist; and the timidity which he ungenerously attributed to Bonaparte was nothing but the caution which a superior intellect saw to be a necessary prelude to a victorious move.

That the fighting honours of the ensuing days rightly belong to Augereau may be frankly conceded. With forces augmented by the northern part of the besiegers of Mantua, he moved rapidly westwards from the Mincio against Brescia, and rescued it from the vanguard of Quosdanovich (August 1st). On the previous day other

Austrian detachments had also, after obstinate conflicts, been worsted near Salo and Lonato. Still, the position was one of great perplexity: for though Masséna's division from the Adige was now beginning to come into touch with Bonaparte's chief force, yet the fronts of Würmser's columns were menacing the French from that side, while the troops of Quosdanovich, hovering about Lonato and Salo, struggled desperately to stretch a guiding hand to their comrades on the Mincio.

Würmser was now discovering his error. Lured towards Mantua by false reports that the French were still covering the siege, he had marched due south when he ought to have rushed to the rescue of his hard-pressed lieutenant at Brescia. Entering Mantua, he enjoyed a brief spell of triumph, and sent to the Emperor Francis the news of the capture of 40 French cannon in the trenches, and of 139 more on the banks of the Po. But, while he was indulging the fond hope that the French were in full retreat from Italy, came the startling news that they had checked Quosdanovich at Brescia and Salo. Realizing his errors, and determining to retrieve them before all was lost, he at once pushed on his vanguard towards Castiglione, and easily gained that village and its castle from a French detachment commanded by General Valette.

The feeble defence of so important a position threw Bonaparte into one of those transports of fury which occasionally dethroned his better judgment. Meeting Valette at Montechiaro, he promptly degraded him to the ranks, refusing to listen to his plea of having received a written order to retire. A report of General Landrieux asserts that the rage of the commander-in-chief was so extreme as for the time even to impair his determination. The outlook was gloomy. The French seemed about to be hemmed in amidst the broken country between Castiglione, Brescia, and Salo. A sudden attack on the Austrians was obviously the only safe and honourable course. But no one knew precisely their numbers or their position. Uncertainty ever preyed on Bonaparte's

ardent imagination. His was a mind that quailed not before visible dangers; but, with all its powers of decisive action, it retained so much of Corsican eeriness as to chafe at the unknown,[1] and to lose for the moment the faculty of forming a vigorous resolution. Like the python, which grips its native rock by the tail in order to gain its full constricting power, so Bonaparte ever needed a groundwork of fact for the due exercise of his mental force.

One of a group of generals, whom he had assembled about him near Montechiaro, proposed that they should ascend the hill which dominated the plain. Even from its ridge no Austrians were to be seen. Again the commander burst forth with petulant reproaches, and even talked of retiring to the Adda. Whereupon, if we may trust the "Memoirs" of General Landrieux, Augereau protested against retreat, and promised success for a vigorous charge. "I wash my hands of it, and I am going away," replied Bonaparte. "And who will command, if you go?" inquired Augereau. "You," retorted Bonaparte, as he left the astonished circle.

However this may be, the first attack on Castiglionewas certainly left to this determined fighter; and the mingling of boldness and guile which he showed on the following day regained for the French not only the village, but also the castle, perched on a precipitous rock. Yet the report of Colonel Graham, who was then at Marshal Würmser's headquarters, somewhat dulls the lustre of Augereau's exploit; for the British officer asserts that the Austrian position had been taken up quite by haphazard, and that fewer than 15,000 white-coats were engaged in this first battle of Castiglione. Furthermore, the narratives of this *mêlée* written by Augereau himself and by two other generals, Landrieux and Verdier, who

[1] See Thiébault's amusing account ("Memoirs," vol. i., ch. xvi.) of Bonaparte's contempt for any officer who could not give him definite information, and of the devices by which his orderlies played on this foible. See too Bourrienne for Bonaparte's dislike of new faces.

were disaffected towards Bonaparte, must naturally be received with much reserve. The effect of Augereau's indomitable energy in restoring confidence to the soldiers and victory to the French tricolour was, however, generously admitted by the Emperor Napoleon; for, at a later time when complaints were being made about Augereau, he generously exclaimed: "Ah, let us not forget that he saved us at Castiglione."[1]

While Augereau was recovering this important position, confused conflicts were raging a few miles further north at Lonato. Masséna at first was driven back by the onset of the Imperialists; but while they were endeavouring to envelop the French, Bonaparte arrived, and in conjunction with Masséna pushed on a central attack such as often wrested victory from the enemy. The white-coats retired in disorder, some towards Gavardo, others towards the lake, hotly followed by the French. In the pursuit towards Gavardo, Bonaparte's old friend, Junot, distinguished himself by his dashing valour. He wounded a colonel, slew six troopers, and, covered with wounds, was finally overthrown into a ditch. Such is Bonaparte's own account. It is gratifying to know that the wounds neither singly nor collectively were dangerous, and did not long repress Junot's activity. A tinge of romance seems, indeed, to have gilded many of these narratives; and a critical examination of the whole story of Lonato seems to suggest doubts whether the victory was as decisive as historians have often represented. If the Austrians were "thrown back on Lake Garda and Desenzano,"[2] it is difficult to see why the pursuers did not drive them into the lake. As a matter of fact, nearly all the beaten troops escaped to Gavardo, while others joined their comrades engaged in the blockade of Peschiera.

A strange incident serves to illustrate the hazards of

[1] Marbot, "Mémoires," ch. xvi. J. G., in his recent work, "Etudes sur la Campagne de 1796-97," p. 115, also defends Augereau.

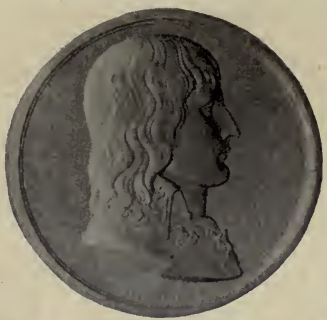
[2] Jomini, vol. viii., p. 321.

war and the confusion of this part of the campaign. A detachment of the vanquished Austrian forces some 4,000 strong, unable to join their comrades at Gavardo or Peschiera, and yet unharmed by the victorious pursuers, wandered about on the hills, and on the next day chanced near Lonato to come upon a much smaller detachment of French. Though unaware of the full extent of their good fortune, the Imperialists boldly sent an envoy to summon the French commanding officer to surrender. When the bandage was taken from his eyes, he was abashed to find himself in the presence of Bonaparte, surrounded by the generals of his staff. The young commander's eyes flashed fire at the seeming insult, and in tones vibrating with well-simulated passion he threatened the envoy with condign punishment for daring to give such a message to the commander-in-chief at his headquarters in the midst of his army. Let him and his men forthwith lay down their arms. Dazed by the demand, and seeing only the victorious chief and not the smallness of his detachment, 4,000 Austrians surrendered to 1,200 French, or rather to the address and audacity of one master-mind.

Elated by this augury of further victory, the republicans prepared for the decisive blow. Würmser, though checked on August 3rd, had been so far reinforced from Mantua as still to indulge hopes of driving the French from Castiglione and cutting his way through to rescue Quosdanovich. He was, indeed, in honour bound to make the attempt; for the engagement had been made, with the usual futility that dogged the Austrian councils, to reunite their forces and *fight the French on the 7th of August.* These cast-iron plans were now adhered to in spite of their dislocation at the hands of Bonaparte and Augereau. Würmser's line stretched from near the village of Médole in a north-easterly direction across the high-road between Brescia and Mantua; while his right wing was posted in the hilly country around Solferino. In fact, his extreme right rested on the tower-crowned heights of Solferino, where the forces of Austria two

generations later maintained so desperate a defence against the onset of Napoleon III. and his liberating army.

Owing to the non-arrival of Mezaros' corps marching from Legnago, Würmser mustered scarcely twenty-five thousand men on his long line; while the very opportune approach of part of Sérurier's division, under the lead of Fiorella, from the south, gave the French an advantage even in numbers. Moreover, Fiorella's advance on the south of Würmser's weaker flank, that near Médole, threatened to turn it and endanger the Austrian communications with Mantua. The Imperialists seem to have been unaware of this danger; and their bad scouting here as elsewhere was largely responsible for the issue of the day. Würmser's desire to stretch a helping hand to Quosdanovich near Lonato and his confidence in the strength of his own right wing betrayed him into a fatal imprudence. Sending out feelers after his hard-pressed colleague on the north, he dangerously prolonged his line, an error in which he was deftly encouraged by Bonaparte, who held back his own left wing. Meanwhile the French were rolling in the other extremity of the Austrian line. Marmont, dashing forward with the horse artillery, took the enemy's left wing in flank and silenced many of their pieces. Under cover of this attack, Fiorella's division was able to creep up within striking distance; and the French cavalry, swooping round the rear of this hard-pressed wing, nearly captured Würmser and his staff. A vigorous counter-attack by the Austrian reserves, or an immediate wheeling round of the whole line, was needed to repulse this brilliant flank attack; but the Austrian reserves had been expended in the north of their line; and an attempt to change front, always a difficult operation, was crushed by a headlong charge of Masséna's and Augereau's divisions on their centre. Before these attacks the whole Austrian line gave way; and, according to Colonel Graham, nothing but this retreat, undertaken "without orders," saved the whole force from being cut



NAPOLEON, 1796.

BRIDGE OF LODI, 1796.
Passage du Po, de l' Adda et du Mincio.

NAPOLEON AS HERCULES, AND THE HYDRA, TO COMMEMORATE THE BATTLE OF DEGO, 1796.

NAPOLEON IN AN EGYPTIAN CAR.
Égypte conquise.
1798.

MEDALS.

From Delaroche's "Trésor de Numismatique."

off. The criticisms of our officer sufficiently reveal the cause of the disaster. The softness and incapacity of Würmser, the absence of a responsible second in command, the ignorance of the number and positions of the French, the determination to advance towards Castiglione and to wait thereabouts for Quosdanovich until a battle could be fought with combined forces on the 7th, the taking up a position almost by haphazard on the Castiglione-Médole line, and the failure to detect Fiorella's approach, present a series of defects and blunders which might have given away the victory to a third-rate opponent.[1]

The battle was by no means sanguinary: it was a series of manœuvres rather than of prolonged conflicts. Hence its interest to all who by preference dwell on the intellectual problems of warfare rather than on the details of fighting. Bonaparte had previously shown that he could deal blows with telling effect. The ease and grace of his moves at the second battle of Castiglione now redeemed the reputation which his uncertain behaviour on the four preceding days had somewhat compromised.

A complete and authentic account of this week of confused fighting has never been written. The archives of Vienna have not as yet yielded up all their secrets; and the reputations of so many French officers were overclouded by this prolonged *mêlée* as to render even the victors' accounts vague and inconsistent. The aim of historians everywhere to give a clear and vivid account, and the desire of Napoleonic enthusiasts to represent their hero as always thinking clearly and acting decisively, have fused trusty ores and worthless slag into an alloy which has passed for true metal. But no student of Napoleon's "Correspondence," of the "Memoirs" of Marmont, and of the recitals of Augereau, Dumas, Landrieux, Verdier, Despinois and others, can hope wholly to unravel the complications arising from the almost continuous conflicts that extended over a dozen leagues of hilly country. War is not always dramatic, however much the readers

[1] "English Hist. Review," January, 1899

of campaigns may yearn after thrilling narratives. In regard to this third act of the Italian campaign, all that can safely be said is that Bonaparte's intuition to raise the siege of Mantua, in order that he might defeat in detail the relieving armies, bears the imprint of genius: but the execution of this difficult movement was unequal, even at times halting; and the French army was rescued from its difficulties only by the grand fighting qualities of the rank and file, and by the Austrian blunders, which outnumbered those of the republican generals.

Neither were the results of the Castiglione cycle of battles quite so brilliant as have been represented. Würmser and Quasdanovich lost in all 17,000 men, it is true: but the former had re-garrisoned and re-victualled Mantua, besides capturing all the French siege-train. Bonaparte's primary aim had been to reduce Mantua, so that he might be free to sweep through Tyrol, join hands with Moreau, and overpower the white-coats in Bavaria. The aim of the Aulic Council and Würmser had been to relieve Mantua and restore the Hapsburg rule over Lombardy. Neither side had succeeded. But the Austrians could at least point to some successes; and, above all, Mantua was in a better state of defence than when the French first approached its walls: and while Mantua was intact, Bonaparte was held to the valley of the Mincio, and could not deal those lightning blows on the Inn and the Danube which he ever regarded as the climax of the campaign. Viewed on its material side, his position was no better than it was before Würmser's incursion into the plains of Venetia.[1]

With true Hapsburg tenacity, Francis determined on further efforts for the relief of Mantua. Apart from the promptings of dynastic pride, his reasons for thus ob-

[1] Such is the judgment of Clausewitz ("Werke," vol. iv.), and it is partly endorsed by J. G. in his "Etudes sur la Campagne de 1796-97." St. Cyr, in his "Memoirs" on the Rhenish campaigns, also blames Bonaparte for not having *earlier* sent away his siege-train to a place of safety. Its loss made the resumed siege of Mantua little more than a blockade.

stinately struggling against Alpine gorges, Italian sentiment, and Bonaparte's genius, are wellnigh inscrutable; and military writers have generally condemned this waste of resources on the Brenta, which, if hurled against the French on the Rhine, would have compelled the withdrawal of Bonaparte from Italy for the defence of Lorraine. But the pride of the Emperor Francis brooked no surrender of his Italian possessions, and again Würmser was spurred on from Vienna to another invasion of Venetia. It would be tedious to give an account of Würmser's second attempt, which belongs rather to the domain of political fatuity than that of military history. Colonel Graham states that the Austrian rank and file laughed at their generals, and bitterly complained that they were being led to the shambles, while the officers almost openly exclaimed: "We must make peace, for we don't know how to make war." This was again apparent. Bonaparte forestalled their attack. Their divided forces fell an easy prey to Masséna, who at Bassano cut Würmser's force to pieces and sent the *débris* flying down the valley of the Brenta. Losing most of their artillery, and separated in two chief bands, the Imperialists seemed doomed to surrender: but Würmser, doubling on his pursuers, made a dash westwards, finally cutting his way to Mantua. There again he vainly endeavoured to make a stand. He was driven from his positions in front of St. Georges and La Favorita, and was shut up in the town itself. This addition to the numbers of the garrison was no increase to its strength; for the fortress, though well provisioned for an ordinary garrison, could not support a prolonged blockade, and the fevers of the early autumn soon began to decimate troops worn out by forced marches and unable to endure the miasma ascending from the marshes of the Mincio.

The French also were wearied by their exertions in the fierce heats of September. Murmurs were heard in the ranks and at the mess tables that Bonaparte's reports of these exploits were tinged by favouritism and by undue severity against those whose fortune had been less con-

spicuous than their merits. One of these misunderstandings was of some importance. Masséna, whose services had been brilliant at Bassano but less felicitous since the crossing of the Adige, reproached Bonaparte for denying praise to the most deserving and lavishing it on men who had come in opportunely to reap the labours of others. His written protest, urged with the old republican frankness, only served further to cloud over the relations between them, which, since Lonato, had not been cordial.[1] Even thus early in his career Bonaparte gained the reputation of desiring brilliant and entire success, and of visiting with his displeasure men who, from whatever cause, did not wrest from Fortune her utmost favours. That was his own mental attitude towards the fickle goddess. After entering Milan he cynically remarked to Marmont: "Fortune is a woman; and the more she does for me, the more I will require of her." Suggestive words, which explain at once the splendour of his rise and the rapidity of his fall.

During the few weeks of comparative inaction which ensued, the affairs of Italy claimed his attention. The prospect of an Austrian re-conquest had caused no less concern to the friends of liberty in the peninsula than joy to the reactionary coteries of the old sovereigns. At Rome and Naples threats against the French were whispered or openly vaunted. The signature of the treaties of peace was delayed, and the fulminations of the Vatican were prepared against the sacrilegious spoilers. After the Austrian war-cloud had melted away, the time had come to punish prophets of evil. The Duke of Modena was charged with allowing a convoy to pass from his State to the garrison of Mantua, and with neglecting to pay the utterly impossible fine to which Bonaparte had condemned him. The men of Reggio and Modena were also encouraged to throw off his yoke and to confide in the French. Those of Reggio succeeded; but in the city of Modena itself the ducal troops repressed the rising. Bonaparte accordingly asked the

[1] Koch, "Mémoires de Masséna," vol. i., p. 199.

advice of the Directory; but his resolution was already formed. Two days after seeking their counsel, he took the decisive step of declaring Modena and Reggio to be under the protection of France. This act formed an exceedingly important departure in the history of France as well as in that of Italy. Hitherto the Directory had succeeded in keeping Bonaparte from active intervention in affairs of high policy. In particular, it had enjoined on him the greatest prudence with regard to the liberated lands of Italy, so as not to involve France in prolonged intervention in the peninsula, or commit her to a war *à outrance* with the Hapsburgs; and its warnings were now urged with all the greater emphasis because news had recently reached Paris of a serious disaster to the French arms in Germany. But while the Directors counselled prudence, Bonaparte forced their hand by declaring the Duchy of Modena to be under the protection of France; and when their discreet missive reached him, he expressed to them his regret that it had come too late. By that time (October 24th) he had virtually founded a new State, for whose security French honour was deeply pledged. This implied the continuance of the French occupation of Northern Italy and therefore a prolongation of Bonaparte's command.

It was not the Duchy of Modena alone which felt the invigorating influence of democracy and nationality. The Papal cities of Bologna and Ferrara had broken away from the Papal sway, and now sent deputies to meet the champions of liberty at Modena and found a free commonwealth. There amidst great enthusiasm was held the first truly representative Italian assembly that had met for many generations; and a levy of 2,800 volunteers, styled the Italian legion, was decreed. Bonaparte visited these towns, stimulated their energy, and bade the turbulent beware of his vengeance, which would be like that of "the exterminating angel." In a brief space these districts were formed into the Cispadane Republic, destined soon to be merged into a yet larger creation. A new life breathed from Modena and Bologna into

Central Italy. The young republic forthwith abolished all feudal laws, decreed civic equality, and ordered the convocation at Bologna of a popularly elected Assembly for the Christmas following. These events mark the first stage in the beginning of that grand movement, *Il Risorgimento*, which after long delays was finally consummated in 1870.

This period of Bonaparte's career may well be lingered over by those who value his invigorating influence on Italian life more highly than his military triumphs. At this epoch he was still the champion of the best principles of the Revolution; he had overthrown Austrian domination in the peninsula, and had shaken to their base domestic tyrannies worse than that of the Hapsburgs. His triumphs were as yet untarnished. If we except the plundering of the liberated and conquered lands, an act for which the Directory was primarily responsible, nothing was at this time lacking to the full orb of his glory. An envoy bore him the welcome news that the English, wearied by the intractable Corsicans, had evacuated the island of his birth; and he forthwith arranged for the return of many of the exiles who had been faithful to the French Republic. Among these was Salicetti, who now returned for a time to his old insular sphere; while his former *protégé* was winning a world-wide fame. Then, turning to the affairs of Central Italy, the young commander showed his diplomatic talents to be not a whit inferior to his genius for war. One instance of this must here suffice. He besought the Pope, who had broken off the lingering negotiations with France, not to bring on his people the horrors of war.[1] The beauty of this appeal, as also of a somewhat earlier appeal to the Emperor Francis at Vienna, is, however, considerably marred by other items which now stand revealed in Bonaparte's instructive correspondence. After hearing of the French defeats in Germany, he knew that the Directors could spare him very few of the 25,000 troops whom he demanded as reinforcements.

[1] "Corresp.," October 21st, 1796.

He was also aware that the Pope, incensed at his recent losses in money and lands, was seeking to revivify the First Coalition. The pacific precepts addressed by the young Corsican to the Papacy must therefore be viewed in the light of merely mundane events and of his secret advice to the French agent at Rome: "The great thing is to gain time. . . . Finally, the game really is for us to throw the ball from one to the other, so as to deceive this old fox."[1]

From these diplomatic amenities the general was forced to turn to the hazards of war. Gauging Bonaparte's missive at its true worth, the Emperor determined to re-conquer Italy, an enterprise that seemed well within his powers. In the month of October victory had crowned the efforts of his troops in Germany. At Würzburg the Archduke Charles had completely beaten Jourdan, and had thrown both his army and that of Moreau back on the Rhine. Animated by reviving hopes, the Imperialists now assembled some 60,000 strong. Alvintzy, a veteran of sixty years, renowned for his bravery, but possessing little strategic ability, was in command of some 35,000 men in the district of Friuli, north of Trieste, covering that seaport from a threatened French attack. With this large force he was to advance due west, towards the River Brenta, while Davidovich, marching through Tyrol by the valley of the Adige, was to meet him with the remainder near Verona. As Jomini has observed, the Austrians gave themselves infinite trouble and encountered grave risks in order to compass a junction of forces which they might quietly have effected at the outset. Despite all Bonaparte's lessons, the Aulic Council still clung to its old plan of enveloping the foe and seeking to bewilder them by attacks delivered from different sides. Possibly also they were emboldened by the comparative smallness of Bonaparte's numbers to repeat this hazardous manœuvre.

[1] "Corresp.," October 24th, 1796. The same policy was employed towards Genoa. This republic was to be lulled into security until it could easily be overthrown or absorbed.

The French could muster little more than 40,000 men; and of these at least 8,000 were needed opposite Mantua.

At first the Imperialists gained important successes; for though the French held their own on the Brenta, yet their forces in the Tyrol were driven down the valley of the Adige with losses so considerable that Bonaparte was constrained to order a general retreat on Verona. He discerned that from this central position he could hold in check Alvintzy's troops marching westwards from Vicenza and prevent their junction with the Imperialists under Davidovich, who were striving to thrust Vaubois' division from the plateau of Rivoli.

But before offering battle to Alvintzy outside Verona, Bonaparte paid a flying visit to his men posted on that plateau in order to rebuke the wavering and animate the whole body with his own dauntless spirit. Forming the troops around him, he addressed two regiments in tones of grief and anger. He reproached them for abandoning strong positions in a panic, and ordered his chief staff officer to inscribe on their colours the ominous words: "They are no longer of the Army of Italy."[1] Stung by this reproach, the men begged with sobs that the general would test their valour before disgracing them for ever. The young commander, who must have counted on such a result to his words, when uttered to French soldiers, thereupon promised to listen to their appeals; and their bravery in the ensuing fights wiped every stain of disgrace from their colours. By such acts as these did he nerve his men against superior numbers and adverse fortune.

Their fortitude was to be severely tried at all points. Alvintzy occupied a strong position on a line of hills at Caldiero, a few miles to the east of Verona. His right wing was protected by the spurs of the Tyrolese Alps, while his left was flanked by the marshes which stretch between the rivers Alpon and Adige; and he protected his front by cannon skilfully ranged along the hills. All the bravery of Masséna's troops failed to dislodge the right

[1] "Ordre du Jour," November 7th, 1796.

wing of the Imperialists. The French centre was torn by the Austrian cannon and musketry. A pitiless storm of rain and sleet hindered the advance of the French guns and unsteadied the aim of the gunners; and finally they withdrew into Verona, leaving behind 2,000 killed and wounded, and 750 prisoners (November 12th). This defeat at Caldiero—for it is idle to speak of it merely as a check—opened up a gloomy vista of disasters for the French; and Bonaparte, though he disguised his fears before his staff and the soldiery, forthwith wrote to the Directors that the army felt itself abandoned at the further end of Italy, and that this fair conquest seemed about to be lost. With his usual device of under-rating his own forces and exaggerating those of his foes, he stated that the French both at Verona and Rivoli were only 18,000, while the grand total of the Imperialists was upwards of 50,000. But he must have known that for the present he had to deal with rather less than half that number. The greater part of the Tyrolese force had not as yet descended the Adige below Roveredo; and allowing for detachments and losses, Alvintzy's array at Caldiero barely exceeded 20,000 effectives.

Bonaparte now determined to hazard one of the most daring turning movements which history records. It was necessary at all costs to drive Alvintzy from the heights of Caldiero before the Tyrolese columns should overpower Vaubois' detachment at Rivoli and debouch in the plains west of Verona. But, as Caldiero could not be taken by a front attack, it must be turned by a flanking movement. To any other general than Bonaparte this would have appeared hopeless; but where others saw nothing but difficulties, his eye discerned a means of safety. South and south-east of those hills lies a vast depression swamped by the flood waters of the Alpon and the Adige. Morasses stretch for some miles west of the village of Arcola, through which runs a road up the eastern bank of the Alpon, crossing that stream at the aforenamed village and leading to the banks of the Adige opposite the village of Ronco; another causeway, di-

verging from the former a little to the north of Ronco, leads in a north-westerly direction towards Porcil. By advancing from Ronco along these causeways, and by seizing Arcola, Bonaparte designed to outflank the Austrians and tempt them into an arena where the personal prowess of the French veterans would have ample scope, and where numbers would be of secondary importance. Only heads of columns could come into direct contact; and the formidable Austrian cavalry could not display its usual prowess. On these facts Bonaparte counted as a set-off to his slight inferiority in numbers.

In the dead of night the divisions of Augereau and Masséna retired through Verona. Officers and soldiers were alike deeply discouraged by this movement, which seemed to presage a retreat towards the Mincio and the abandonment of Lombardy. To their surprise, when outside the gate they received the order to turn to the left down the western bank of the Adige. At Ronco the mystery was solved. A bridge of boats had there been thrown across the Adige; and, crossing this without opposition, Augereau's troops rapidly advanced along the causeway leading to Arcola and menaced the Austrian rear, while Masséna's column defiled north-west, so as directly to threaten his flank at Caldiero. The surprise, however, was by no means complete; for Alvintzy himself purposed to cross the Adige at Zevio, so as to make a dash on Mantua, and in order to protect his flank he had sent a detachment of Croats to hold Arcola. These now stoutly disputed Augereau's progress, pouring in from the loopholed cottages volleys which tore away the front of every column of attack. In vain did Augereau, seizing the colours, lead his foremost regiment to the bridge of Arcola. Riddled by the musketry, his men fell back in disorder. In vain did Bonaparte himself, dismounting from his charger, seize a flag, rally these veterans and lead them towards the bridge. The Croats, constantly reinforced, poured in so deadly a fire as to check the advance: Muiron, Marmont, and a handful of gallant men still pressed on, thereby screening the body

of their chief; but Muiron fell dead, and another officer, seizing Bonaparte, sought to drag him back from certain death. The column wavered under the bullets, fell back

PLAN TO ILLUSTRATE THE VICTORY OF ARCOLA.

to the further side of the causeway, and in the confusion the commander fell into the deep dyke at the side. Agonized at the sight, the French rallied, while Marmont and Louis Bonaparte rescued their beloved chief from capture or from a miry death, and he retired to Ronco,

soon followed by the wearied troops.[1] This memorable first day of fighting at Arcola (November 15th) closed on the strange scene of two armies encamped on dykes, exhausted by an almost amphibious conflict, like that waged by the Dutch "Beggars" in their war of liberation against Spain. Though at Arcola the republicans had been severely checked, yet further west Masséna had held his own; and the French movement as a whole had compelled Alvintzy to suspend any advance on Verona or on Mantua, to come down from the heights of Caldiero, and to fight on ground where his superior numbers were of little avail. This was seen on the second day of fighting on the dykes opposite Arcola, which was, on the whole, favourable to the smaller veteran force. On the third day Bonaparte employed a skilful ruse to add to the discouragement of his foes. He posted a small body of horsemen behind a spinney near the Austrian flank, with orders to sound their trumpets as if for a great cavalry charge. Alarmed by the noise and by the appearance of French troops from the side of Legnago and behind Arcola, the demoralized white-coats suddenly gave way and retreated for Vicenza.

Victory again declared for the troops who could dare the longest, and whose general was never at a loss in face of any definite danger. Both armies suffered severely in these desperate conflicts;[2] but, while the Austrians felt

[1] Marmont, "Mémoires," vol. i., p. 237. I have followed Marmont s narrative, as that of the chief actor in this strange scene. It is less dramatic than the usual account, as found in Thiers, and therefore is more probable. The incident illustrates the folly of a commander doing the work of a sergeant. Marmont points out that the best tactics would have been to send one division to cross the Adige at Albaredo, and so take Arcola in the rear. Thiers' criticism, that this would have involved too great a diffusion of the French line, is refuted by the fact that on the third day a move on that side induced the Austrians to evacuate Arcola.

[2] Koch, "Mémoires de Masséna," vol. i., p. 255, in his very complete account of the battle, gives the enemy's losses as upwards of 2,000 killed or wounded, and 4,000 prisoners with 11 cannon. Thiers gives 40,000 as Alvintzy's force before the battle—an impossible number. See *ante*.

that the cup of victory had been snatched from their very lips, the French soldiery were dazzled by this transcendent exploit of their chief. They extolled his bravery, which almost vied with the fabulous achievement of Horatius Cocles, and adored the genius which saw safety and victory for his discouraged army amidst swamps and dykes. Bonaparte himself, with that strange mingling of the practical and the superstitious which forms the charm of his character, ever afterwards dated the dawn of his fortune in its full splendour from those hours of supreme crisis among the morasses of Arcola. But we may doubt whether this posing as the favourite of fortune was not the result of his profound knowledge of the credulity of the vulgar herd, which admires genius and worships bravery, but grovels before persistent good luck.

Though it is difficult to exaggerate the skill and bravery of the French leader and his troops, the failure of his opponents is inexplicable but for the fact that most of their troops were unable to manœuvre steadily in the open, that Alvintzy was inexperienced as a commander-in-chief, and was hampered throughout by a bad plan of campaign. Meanwhile the other Austrian army, led by Davidovich, had driven Vaubois from his position at Rivoli; and had the Imperialist generals kept one another informed of their moves, or had Alvintzy, disregarding a blare of trumpets and a demonstration on his flank and rear, clung to Arcola for two days longer the French would have been nipped between superior forces. But, as it was, the lack of accord in the Austrian movements nearly ruined the Tyrolese wing, which pushed on triumphantly towards Verona, while Alvintzy was retreating eastwards. Warned just in time, Davidovich hastily retreated to Roveredo, leaving a whole battalion in the hands of the French. To crown this chapter of blunders, Würmser, whose sortie after Caldiero might have been most effective, tardily essayed to break through the blockaders, when both his colleagues were in retreat. How different were these ill-assorted moves

from those of Bonaparte. His maxims throughout this campaign, and his whole military career, were : (1) divide for foraging, concentrate for fighting ; (2) unity of command is essential for success ; (3) time is everything. This firm grasp of the essentials of modern warfare insured his triumph over enemies who trusted to obsolete methods for the defence of antiquated polities.[1]

The battle of Arcola had an important influence on the fate of Italy and Europe. In the peninsula all the elements hostile to the republicans were preparing for an explosion in their rear which should reaffirm the old saying that Italy was the tomb of the French. Naples had signed terms of peace with them, it is true ; but the natural animosity of the Vatican against its despoilers could easily have leagued the south of Italy with the other States that were working secretly for their expulsion. While the Austrians were victoriously advancing, these aims were almost openly avowed, and at the close of the year 1796 Bonaparte moved south to Bologna in order to guide the Italian patriots in their deliberations and menace the Pope with an invasion of the Roman States. From this the Pontiff was for the present saved by new efforts on the part of Austria. But before describing the final attempt of the Hapsburgs to wrest Italy from their able adversary, it will be well to notice his growing ascendancy in diplomatic affairs.

While Bonaparte was struggling in the marshes of Arcola, the Directory was on the point of sending to Vienna an envoy, General Clarke, with proposals for an armistice preliminary to negotiations for peace with Austria. This step was taken, because France was distracted by open revolt in the south, by general discontent in the west, and by the retreat of her Rhenish armies, now flung back on the soil of the Republic by the Austrian Arch-duke Charles. Unable to support large

[1] The Austrian official figures for the loss in the three days at Arcola give 2,046 killed and wounded, 4,090 prisoners, and 11 cannon. Napoleon put it down as 13,000 in all! See Schels in "Oest. Milit. Zeitschrift" for 1829.

forces in the east of France out of its bankrupt exchequer, the Directory desired to be informed of the state of feeling at Vienna. It therefore sent Clarke with offers, which might enable him to look into the political and military situation at the enemy's capital, and see whether peace could not be gained at the price of some of Bonaparte's conquests. The envoy was an elegant and ambitious young man, descended from an Irish family long settled in France, who had recently gained Carnot's favour, and now desired to show his diplomatic skill by subjecting Bonaparte to the present aims of the Directory

The Directors' secret instructions reveal the plans which they then harboured for the reconstruction of the Continent. Having arranged an armistice which should last up to the end of the next spring, Clarke was to set forth arrangements which might suit the House of Hapsburg. He might discuss the restitution of all their possessions in Italy, and the acquisition of the Bishopric of Salzburg and other smaller German and Swabian territories: or, if she did not recover the Milanese, Austria might gain the northern parts of the Papal States as compensation; and the Duke of Tuscany—a Hapsburg—might reign at Rome, yielding up his duchy to the Duke of Parma; while, as this last potentate was a Spanish Bourbon, France might for her good offices to this House gain largely from Spain in America.[1] In these and other proposals two methods of bargaining are everywhere prominent. The great States are in every case to gain at the expense of their weaker neighbours; Austria is to be appeased; and France is to reap enormous gains ultimately at the expense of smaller Germanic or Italian States. These facts should clearly be noted. Napoleon was afterwards deservedly blamed for carrying out these unprincipled methods; but, at the worst, he only developed them from those of the Directors, who, with the cant of

[1] A forecast of the plan realized in 1801-2, whereby Bonaparte gained Louisiana for a time.

Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity on their lips, battened on the plunder of the liberated lands, and cynically proposed to share the spoil of weaker States with the potentates against whom they publicly declaimed as tyrants.

The chief aim of these negotiations, so Clarke was assured, was to convince the Court of Vienna that it would get better terms by treating with France directly and alone, rather than by joining in the negotiations which had recently been opened at Paris by England. But the Viennese Ministers refused to allow Clarke to proceed to their capital, and appointed Vicenza as the seat of the deliberations.

They were brief. Through the complex web of civilian intrigue, Bonaparte forthwith thrust the mailed hand of the warrior. He had little difficulty in proving to Clarke that the situation was materially altered by the battle of Arcola. The fall of Mantua was now only a matter of weeks. To allow its provisions to be replenished for the term of the armistice was an act that no successful general could tolerate. For that fortress the whole campaign had been waged, and three Austrian armies had been hurled back into Tyrol and Friuli. Was it now to be provisioned, in order that the Directory might barter away the Cispadane Republic? He speedily convinced Clarke of the fatuity of the Directors' proposals. He imbued him with his own contempt for an armistice that would rob the victors of their prize; and, as the Court of Vienna still indulged hopes of success in Italy, Clarke's negotiations at Vicenza came to a speedy conclusion.

In another important matter the Directory also completely failed. Nervous as to Bonaparte's ambition, it had secretly ordered Clarke to watch his conduct and report privately to Paris. Whether warned by a friend at Court, or forearmed by his own sagacity, Bonaparte knew of this, and in his intercourse with Clarke deftly let the fact be seen. He quickly gauged Clarke's powers, and the aim of his mission. "He is a spy," he remarked a little later to Miot, "whom the Directory have set

upon me: he is a man of no talent—only conceited." The splendour of his achievements and the mingled grace and authority of his demeanour so imposed on the envoy that he speedily fell under the influence of the very man whom he was to watch, and became his enthusiastic adherent.

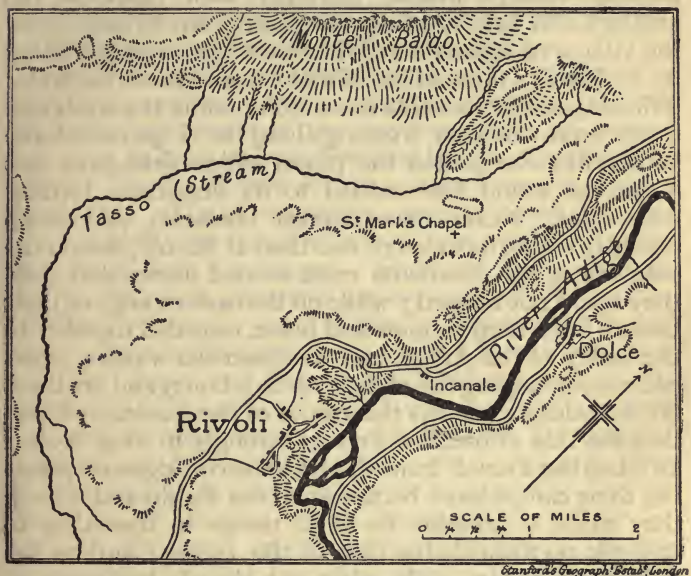
Bonaparte was at Bologna, supervising the affairs of the Cispadane Republic, when he heard that the Austrians were making a last effort for the relief of Mantua. Another plan had been drawn up by the Aulic Council at Vienna. Alvintzy, after recruiting his wearied force at Bassano, was quickly to join the Tyrolese column at Roveredo, thereby forming an army of 28,000 men wherewith to force the position of Rivoli and drive the French in on Mantua: 9,000 Imperialists under Provera were also to advance from the Brenta upon Legnago, in order to withdraw the attention of the French from the real attempt made by the valley of the Adige; while 10,000 others at Bassano and elsewhere were to assail the French front at different points and hinder their concentration. It will be observed that the errors of July and November, 1796, were now yet a third time to be committed: the forces destined merely to make diversions were so strengthened as not to be merely light bodies distracting the aim of the French, while Alvintzy's main force was thereby so weakened as to lack the impact necessary for victory.

Nevertheless, the Imperialists at first threw back their foes with some losses; and Bonaparte, hurrying northwards to Verona, was for some hours in a fever of uncertainty as to the movements and strength of the assailants. Late at night on January 13th he knew that Provera's advance was little more than a demonstration, and that the real blow would fall on the 10,000 men marshalled by Joubert at Monte Baldo and Rivoli. Forthwith he rode to the latter place, and changed retreat and discouragement into a vigorous offensive by the news that 13,000 more men were on the march to defend the strong position of Rivoli.

The great defensive strength of this plateau had from the first attracted his attention. There the Adige in a sharp bend westward approaches within six miles of Lake Garda. There, too, the mountains, which hem in the gorge of the river on its right bank, bend away towards the lake and leave a vast natural amphitheatre, near the centre of which rises the irregular plateau that commands the exit from Tyrol. Over this plateau towers on the north Monte Baldo, which, near the river gorge, sends out southward a sloping ridge, known as San Marco, connecting it with the plateau. At the foot of this spur is the summit of the road which leads the traveller from Trent to Verona; and, as he halts at the top of the zigzag, near the village of Rivoli, his eye sweeps over the winding gorge of the river beneath, the threatening mass of Monte Baldo on the north, and on the west of the village he gazes down on a natural depression which has been sharply furrowed by a torrent. The least experienced eye can see that the position is one of great strength. It is a veritable parade ground among the mountains, almost cut off from them by the ceaseless action of water, and destined for the defence of the plains of Italy. A small force posted at the head of the winding roadway can hold at bay an army toiling up from the valley; but, as at Thermopylæ, the position is liable to be outflanked by an enterprising foe, who should scale the footpath leading over the western offshoots of Monte Baldo, and, fording the stream at its foot, should then advance eastwards against the village. This, in part, was Alvintzy's plan, and having nearly 28,000 men,[1]

[1] Estimates of the Austrian force differ widely. Bonaparte guessed it at 45,000, which is accepted by Thiers; Alison says 40,000; Thiébault opines that it was 75,000; Marmont gives the total as 26,217. The Austrian official figures are 28,022 *before* the fighting north of Monte Baldo. See my article in the "Eng. Hist. Review" for April, 1899. I have largely followed the despatches of Colonel Graham, who was present at this battle. As "J. G." points out (*op. cit.*, p. 237), the French had 1,500 horse and some forty cannon, which gave them a great advantage over foes who could make no effective use of these arms.

he doubted not that his enveloping tactics must capture Joubert's division of 10,000 men. So daunted was even this brave general by the superior force of his foes that he had ordered a retreat southwards when an aide-de-camp arrived at full gallop and ordered him to hold Rivoli at all costs. Bonaparte's arrival at 4 a.m. explained the order, and an attack made during the dark-



NEIGHBOURHOOD OF RIVOLI.

ness wrested from the Austrians the chapel on the San Marco ridge which stands on the ridge above the zigzag track. The reflection of the Austrian watch-fires in the wintry sky showed him their general position. To an unskilled observer the wide sweep of the glare portended ruin for the French. To the eye of Bonaparte the sight brought hope. It proved that his foes were still bent on their old plan of enveloping him: and from information which he treacherously received from Alvintzy's staff he

must have known that that commander had far fewer than the 45,000 men which he ascribed to him in bulletins.

Yet the full dawn of that January day saw the Imperialists flushed with success, as their six separate columns drove in the French outposts and moved towards Rivoli. Of these, one was on the eastern side of the Adige and merely cannonaded across the valley: another column wound painfully with most of the artillery and cavalry along the western bank, making for the village of Incanale and the foot of the zigzag leading up to Rivoli: three others defiled over Monte Baldo by difficult paths impassable to cannon: while the sixth and westernmost column, winding along the ridge near Lake Garda, likewise lacked the power which field-guns and horsemen would have added to its important turning movement. Never have natural obstacles told more potently on the fortunes of war than at Rivoli; for on the side where the assailants most needed horses and guns they could not be used; while on the eastern edge of their broken front their cannon and horse, crowded together in the valley of the Adige, had to climb the winding road under the plunging fire of the French infantry and artillery. Nevertheless, such was the ardour of the Austrian attack, that the tide of battle at first set strongly in their favour. Driving the French from the San Marco ridge and pressing their centre hard between Monte Baldo and Rivoli, they made it possible for their troops in the valley to struggle on towards the foot of the zigzag; and on the west their distant right wing was already beginning to threaten the French rear. Despite the arrival of Masséna's troops from Verona about 9 a.m., the republicans showed signs of unsteadiness. Joubert on the ground above the Adige, Berthier in the centre, and Masséna on the left, were gradually forced back. An Austrian column, advancing from the side of Monte Baldo by the narrow ravine, stole round the flank of a French regiment in front of Masséna's division, and by a vigorous charge sent it flying in a panic which promised to spread to another regiment thus uncovered. This was too much

for the veteran, already dubbed "the spoilt child of victory"; he rushed to its captain, bitterly upbraided him and the other officers, and finally showered blows on them with the flat of his sword. Then, riding at full speed to two tried regiments of his own division, he ordered them to check the foe; and these invincible heroes promptly drove back the assailants. Even so, however, the valour of the best French regiments and the skill of Masséna, Berthier, and Joubert barely sufficed to hold back the onstreaming tide of white-coats opposite Rivoli.

Yet even at this crisis the commander, confident in his central position, and knowing his ability to ward off the encircling swoops of the Austrian eagle, maintained that calm demeanour which moved the wonder of smaller minds. His confidence in his seasoned troops was not misplaced. The Imperialists, overburdened by long marches and faint now for lack of food, could not maintain their first advantage. Some of their foremost troops, that had won the broken ground in front of St. Mark's Chapel, were suddenly charged by French horse; they fled in panic, crying out, "French cavalry!" and the space won was speedily abandoned to the tricolour. This sudden rebuff was to dash all their hopes of victory; for at that crisis of the day the chief Austrian column of nearly 8,000 men was struggling up the zigzag ascent leading from the valley of the Adige to the plateau, in the fond hope that their foes were by this time driven from the summit. Despite the terrible fire that tore their flanks, the Imperialists were clutching desperately at the plateau, when Bonaparte put forth his full striking power. He could now assail the crowded ranks of the doomed column in front and on both flanks. A charge of Leclerc's horse and of Joubert's infantry crushed its head; volleys of cannon and musketry from the plateau tore its sides; an ammunition wagon exploded in its midst; and the great constrictor forthwith writhed its bleeding coils back into the valley, where it lay crushed and helpless for the rest of the fight.

Animated by this lightning stroke of their commander, the French turned fiercely towards Monte Baldo and drove back their opponents into the depression at its foot. But already at their rear loud shouts warned them of a new danger. The western detachment of the Imperialists had meanwhile worked round their rear, and, ignorant of the fate of their comrades, believed that Bonaparte's army was caught in a trap. The eyes of all the French staff officers were now turned anxiously on their commander, who quietly remarked, "We have them now." He knew, in fact, that other French troops marching up from Verona would take these new foes in the rear; and though Junot and his horsemen failed to cut their way through so as to expedite their approach, yet speedily a French regiment burst through the encircling line and joined in the final attack which drove these last assailants from the heights south of Rivoli, and later on compelled them to surrender.

Thus closed the desperate battle of Rivoli (January 14th). Defects in the Austrian position and the opportune arrival of French reinforcements served to turn an Austrian success into a complete rout. Circumstances which to a civilian may seem singly to be of small account sufficed to tilt the trembling scales of warfare, and Alvintzy's army now reeled helplessly back into Tyrol with a total loss of 15,000 men and of nearly all its artillery and stores. Leaving Joubert to pursue it towards Trent, Bonaparte now flew southwards towards Mantua, whither Provera had cut his way. Again his untiring energy, his insatiable care for all probable contingencies, reaped a success which the ignorant may charge to the account of his fortune. Strengthening Augereau's division by light troops, he captured the whole of Provera's army at La Favorita, near the walls of Mantua (January 16th). The natural result of these two dazzling triumphs was the fall of the fortress for which the Emperor Francis had risked and lost five armies. Würmser surrendered Mantua on February 2nd with 18,000 men and immense supplies of arms and stores.

The close of this wondrous campaign was graced by an act of clemency. Generous terms were accorded to the veteran marshal, whose fidelity to blundering councillors at Vienna had thrown up in brilliant relief the prudence, audacity, and resourcefulness of the young war-god.

It was now time to chastise the Pope for his support of the enemies of France. The Papalini proved to be contemptible as soldiers. They fled before the republicans, and a military promenade brought the invaders to Ancona, and then inland to Tolentino, where Pius VI. sued for peace. The resulting treaty signed at that place (February 19th) condemned the Holy See to close its ports to the allies, especially to the English ; to acknowledge the acquisition of Avignon by France, and the establishment of the Cispadane Republic at Bologna, Ferrara, and the surrounding districts ; to pay 30,000,000 francs to the French Government ; and to surrender 100 works of art to the victorious republicans.

It is needless to describe the remaining stages in Bonaparte's campaign against Austria. Hitherto he had contended against fairly good, though discontented and discouraged troops, badly led, and hampered by the mountain barrier which separated them from their real base of operations. In the last part of the war he fought against troops demoralized by an almost unbroken chain of disasters. The Austrians were now led by a brave and intelligent general, the Archduke Charles ; but he was hampered by rigorous instructions from Vienna, by senile and indolent generals, by the indignation or despair of the younger officers at the official favouritism which left them in obscurity, and by the apathy of soldiers who had lost heart. Neither his skill nor the natural strength of their positions in Friuli and Carinthia could avail against veterans flushed with victory and marshalled with unerring sagacity. The rest of the war only served to emphasize the truth of Napoleon's later statement, that the moral element constitutes three-fourths of an army's strength. The barriers offered by the River Tagliamento and the many

commanding heights of the Carnic and the Noric Alps were as nothing to the triumphant republicans; and from the heights that guard the province of Styria, the genius of Napoleon flashed as a terrifying portent to the Court of Vienna and the potentates of Central Europe. When the tricolour standards were nearing the town of Leoben, the Emperor Francis sent envoys to sue for peace;[1] and the preliminaries signed there, within one hundred miles of the Austrian capital, closed the campaign which a year previously had opened with so little promise for the French on the narrow strip of land between the Maritime Alps and the petty township of Savona.

These brilliant results were due primarily to the consummate leadership of Bonaparte. His geographical instincts discerned the means of profiting by natural obstacles and of turning them when they seemed to screen his opponents. Prompt to divine their plans, he bewildered them by the audacity of his combinations, which overbore their columns with superior force at the very time when he seemed doomed to succumb. Genius so commanding had not been displayed even by Frederick or Marlborough. And yet these brilliant results could not have been achieved by an army which rarely exceeded 45,000 men without the strenuous bravery and tactical skill of the best generals of division, Augereau, Masséna, and Joubert, as well as of officers who had shown their worth in many a doubtful fight; Lannes, the hero of Lodi and Arcola; Marmont, noted for his daring advance of the guns at Castiglione; Victor, who justified his name by hard fighting at La Favorita; Murat, the *beau sabreur*, and Junot, both dashing cavalry generals; and many more whose daring earned them a soldier's death in order to gain glory for France and

[1] This was doubtless facilitated by the death of the Czarina, Catherine II., in November, 1796. She had been on the point of entering the Coalition against France. The new Czar Paul was at that time for peace. The Austrian Minister Thugut, on hearing of her death, exclaimed, "This is the climax of our disasters."

liberty for Italy. Still less ought the soldiery to be forgotten ; those troops, whose tattered uniforms bespoke their ceaseless toils, who grumbled at the frequent lack of bread, but, as Masséna observed, never *before* a battle, who even in retreat never doubted the genius of their chief, and fiercely rallied at the longed-for sign of fighting. The source of this marvellous energy is not hard to discover. Their bravery was fed by that wellspring of hope which had made of France a nation of free men determined to free the millions beyond their frontiers. The French columns were "equality on the march"; and the soldiery, animated by this grand enthusiasm, found its militant embodiment in the great captain who seemed about to liberate Italy and Central Europe.

CHAPTER VII

LEOBEN TO CAMPO FORMIO

IN signing the preliminaries of peace at Leoben, which formed in part the basis for the Treaty of Campo Formio, Bonaparte appears as a diplomatist of the first rank. He had already signed similar articles with the Court of Turin and with the Vatican. But such a transaction with the Emperor was infinitely more important than with the third-rate powers of the peninsula. He now essays his first flight to the highest levels of international diplomacy. In truth, his mental endowments, like those of many of the greatest generals, were no less adapted to success in the council-chamber than on the field of battle; for, indeed, the processes of thought and the methods of action are not dissimilar in the spheres of diplomacy and war. To evade obstacles on which an opponent relies, to multiply them in his path, to bewilder him by feints before overwhelming him by a crushing onset, these are the arts which yield success either to the negotiator or to the commander.

In imposing terms of peace on the Emperor at Leoben (April 18th, 1797), Bonaparte reduced the Directory, and its envoy, Clarke, who was absent in Italy, to a subordinate *rôle*. As commander-in-chief, he had power only to conclude a brief armistice, but now he signed the preliminaries of peace. His excuse to the Directory was ingenious. While admitting the irregularity of his conduct, he pleaded the isolated position of his army, and the absence of Clarke, and that, under the circumstances, his act had been merely "a military operation." He could also urge that he had in his rear a disaffected

Venetia, and that he believed the French armies on the Rhine to be stationary and unable to cross that river. But the very tardy advent of Clarke on the scene strengthens the supposition that Bonaparte was at the time by no means loth to figure as the pacifier of the Continent. Had he known the whole truth, namely, that the French were gaining a battle on the east bank of the Rhine while the terms of peace were being signed at Leoben, he would most certainly have broken off the negotiations and have dictated harsher terms at the gates of Vienna. That was the vision which shone before his eyes three years previously, when he sketched to his friends at Nice the plan of campaign, beginning at Savona and ending before the Austrian capital; and great was his chagrin at hearing the tidings of Moreau's success on April 20th. The news reached him on his return from Leoben to Italy, when he was detained for a few hours by a sudden flood of the River Tagliamento. At once he determined to ride back and make some excuse for a rupture with Austria; and only the persistent remonstrances of Berthier turned him from this mad resolve, which would forthwith have exhibited him to the world as estimating more highly the youthful promptings of destiny than the honour of a French negotiator.

The terms which he had granted to the Emperor were lenient enough. The only definitive gain to France was the acquisition of the Austrian Netherlands (Belgium), for which troublesome possession the Emperor was to have compensation elsewhere. Nothing absolutely binding was said about the left, or west, bank of the Rhine, except that Austria recognized the "constitutional limits" of France, but reaffirmed the integrity of "The Empire."[1] These were contradictory statements; for France had declared the Rhine to be her natural boundary, and the old "Empire" included Belgium, Trèves, and Luxemburg. But, for the interpretation of these vague formularies, the following secret and all-important articles were appended. While the

[1] Hüffer, "Oesterreich und Preussen," p. 263.

Emperor renounced that part of his Italian possessions which lay to the west of the Oglio, he was to receive all the mainland territories of Venice east of that river, including Dalmatia and Istria. Venice was also to cede her lands west of the Oglio to the French Government; and in return for these sacrifices she was to gain the three legations of Romagna, Ferrara, and Bologna—the very lands which Bonaparte had recently formed into the Cispadane Republic! For the rest, the Emperor would have to recognize the proposed Republic at Milan, as also that already existing at Modena, "compensation" being somewhere found for the deposed duke.

From the correspondence of Thugut, the Austrian Minister, it appears certain that Austria herself had looked forward to the partition of the Venetian mainland territories, and this was the scheme which Bonaparte *actually proposed to her at Leoben.* Still more extraordinary was his proposal to sacrifice, ostensibly to Venice but ultimately to Austria, the greater part of the Cispadane Republic. It is, indeed, inexplicable, except on the ground that his military position at Leoben was more brilliant than secure. His uneasiness about this article of the preliminaries is seen in his letter of April 22nd to the Directors, which explains that the preliminaries need not count for much. But most extraordinary of all was his procedure concerning the young Lombard Republic. He seems quite calmly to have discussed its retrocession to the Austrians, and that, too, after he had encouraged the Milanese to found a republic, and had declared that every French victory was "a line of the constitutional charter."[1] The most reasonable explanation is that Bonaparte over-estimated the military strength of Austria, and undervalued the energy of the men of Milan, Modena, and Bologna, of whose levies he spoke most contemptuously. Certain it is that he desired to disengage himself from their affairs so as to be free for the grander visions of oriental con-

[1] "Moniteur," 20 Floreal, Year V.; Sciout, "Le Directoire," vol. ii., ch. vii.

quest that now haunted his imagination. Whatever were his motives in signing the preliminaries at Leoben, he speedily found means for their modification in the ever-enlarging area of negotiable lands.

It is now time to return to the affairs of Venice. For seven months the towns and villages of that republic had been a prey to pitiless warfare and systematic rapacity, a fate which the weak ruling oligarchy could neither avert nor avenge. In the western cities, Bergamo and Brescia, whose interests and feelings linked them with Milan rather than Venice, the populace desired an alliance with the nascent republic on the west and a severance from the gloomy despotism of the Queen of the Adriatic. Though glorious in her prime, she now governed with obscurantist methods inspired by fear of her weakness becoming manifest; and Bonaparte, tearing off the mask which hitherto had screened her dotage, left her despised by the more progressive of her own subjects. Even before he first entered the Venetian territory, he set forth to the Directory the facilities for plunder and partition which it offered. Referring to its reception of the Comte de Provence (the future Louis XVIII.) and the occupation of Peschiera by the Austrians, he wrote (June 6th, 1796):

"If your plan is to extract five or six million francs from Venice, I have expressly prepared for you this sort of rupture with her. . . . If you have intentions more pronounced, I think that you ought to continue this subject of contention, instruct me as to your desires, and wait for the favourable opportunity, which I will seize according to circumstances, for we must not have everybody on our hands at the same time."

The events which now transpired in Venetia gave him excuses for the projected partition. The weariness felt by the Brescians and Bergamesques for Venetian rule had been artfully played on by the Jacobins of Milan and by the French Generals Kilmaine and Landrieux; and an effort made by the Venetian officials to repress the growing discontent brought about disturbances in

which some men of the "Lombard legion" were killed. The complicity of the French in the revolt is clearly established by the Milanese journals and by the fact that Landrieux forthwith accepted the command of the rebels at Bergamo and Brescia.[1] But while these cities espoused the Jacobin cause, most of the Venetian towns and all the peasantry remained faithful to the old Government. It was clear that a conflict must ensue, even if Bonaparte and some of his generals had not secretly worked to bring it about. That he and they did so work cannot now be disputed. The circle of proof is complete. The events at Brescia and Bergamo were part of a scheme for precipitating a rupture with Venice; and their success was so far assured that Bonaparte at Leoben secretly bargained away nearly the whole of the Venetian lands. Furthermore, a fortnight before the signing of these preliminaries, he had suborned a vile wretch, Salvatori by name, to issue a proclamation purporting to come from the Venetian authorities, which urged the people everywhere to rise and massacre the French. It was issued on April 5th, though it bore the date of March 20th. At once the Doge warned his people that it was a base fabrication, But the mischief had been done. On Easter Monday (April 17th) a chance affray in Verona let loose the passions which had been rising for months past: the populace rose in fury against the French detachment quartered on them: and all the soldiers who could not find shelter in the citadel, even the sick in the hospitals, fell victims to the craving for revenge for the humiliations and exactions of the last seven months.[2] Such was Easter-tide at Verona—*les Pâques véronaises*—an event

[1] See Landrieux's letter on the subject in Koch's "Mémoires de Masséna," vol. ii.; "Pièces Justif.," *ad fin.*; and Bonaparte's "Corresp.," letter of March 24th, 1797. The evidence of this letter, as also of those of April 9th and 19th, is ignored by Thiers, whose account of Venetian affairs is misleading. It is clear that Bonaparte contemplated partition long before the revolt of Brescia.

[2] Botta, "Storia d'Italia," vol. ii., chs. x., etc.; Daru, "Hist. de Venise," vol. v.; Gaffarel, "Bonaparte et les Républiques Italiennes," pp. 137-139; and Sciout, "Le Directoire," vol ii., chs. v. and vii.

that recalls the Sicilian Vespers of Palermo in its blind southern fury.

The finale somewhat exceeded Bonaparte's expectations, but he must have hailed it with a secret satisfaction. It gave him a good excuse for wholly extinguishing Venice as an independent power. According to the secret articles signed at Leoben, the city of Venice was to have retained her independence and gained the Legations. But her contumacy could now be chastised by annihilation. Venice could, in fact, indemnify the Hapsburgs for the further cessions which France exacted from them elsewhere; and in the process Bonaparte would free himself from the blame which attached to his hasty signature of the preliminaries at Leoben.[1] He was now determined to secure the Rhine frontier for France, to gain independence, under French tutelage, not only for the Lombard Republic, but also for Modena and the Legations. These were his aims during the negotiations to which he gave the full force of his intellect during the spring and summer of 1797.

The first thing was to pour French troops into Italy so as to extort better terms: the next was to declare war on Venice. For this there was now ample justification; for, apart from the massacre at Verona, another outrage had been perpetrated. A French corsair, which had persisted in anchoring in a forbidden part of the harbour of Venice, had been riddled by the batteries and captured. For this act, and for the outbreak at Verona, the Doge and Senate offered ample reparation: but Bonaparte refused to listen to these envoys, "dripping with French blood," and haughtily bade Venice evacuate her mainland territories.[2] For various reasons he decided to use guile rather than force. He found in Venice a secretary of the French legation, Villetard by name, who could be trusted dextrously to undermine the crumbling fabric of the oligarchy.[3] This man persuaded

[1] Sorel, "Bonaparte et Hoche en 1797," p. 65.
[2] Letter of April 30th, 1797.
[3] Letter of May 13th, 1797.

the terrified populace that nothing would appease the fury of the French general but the deposition of the existing oligarchy and the formation of a democratic municipality. The people and the patricians alike swallowed the bait; and the once haughty Senate tamely pronounced its own doom. Disorders naturally occurred on the downfall of the ancient oligarchy, especially when the new municipality ordered the removal of Venetian men-of-war into the hands of the French and the introduction of French troops by help of Venetian vessels. A mournful silence oppressed even the democrats when 5,000 French troops entered Venice on board the flotilla. The famous State, which for centuries had ruled the waters of the Levant, and had held the fierce Turks at bay, a people numbering 3,000,000 souls and boasting a revenue of 9,000,000 ducats, now struck not one blow against conquerors who came in the guise of liberators.

On the same day Bonaparte signed at Milan a treaty of alliance with the envoys of the new Venetian Government. His friendship was to be dearly bought. In secret articles, which were of more import than the vague professions of amity which filled the public document, it was stipulated that the French and Venetian Republics should come to an understanding as to the *exchange* of certain territories, that Venice should pay a contribution in money and in materials of war, should aid the French navy by furnishing three battleships and two frigates, and should enrich the museums of her benefactress by 20 paintings and 500 manuscripts. While he was signing these conditions of peace, the Directors were despatching from Paris a declaration of war against Venice. Their decision was already obsolete: it was founded on Bonaparte's despatch of April 30th but in the interval their proconsul had wholly changed the situation by overthrowing the rule of the Doge and Senate, and by setting up a democracy, through which he could extract the wealth of that land. The Directors' declaration of war was accordingly stopped at Milan, and no more was heard of it. They were thus forcibly

THE SPOLIATION OF ST. MARK'S, VENICE, MAY, 1797.

reminded of the truth of his previous warning that things would certainly go wrong unless they consulted him on all important details.[1]

This treaty of Milan was the fourth important convention concluded by the general, who, at the beginning of the campaign of 1796, had been forbidden even to sign an armistice without consulting Salicetti!

It was speedily followed by another, which in many respects redounds to the credit of the young conqueror. If his conduct towards Venice inspires loathing, his treatment of Genoa must excite surprise and admiration. Apart from one very natural outburst of spleen, it shows little of that harshness which might have been expected from the man who had looked on Genoa as the embodiment of mean despotism. Up to the summer of 1796 Bonaparte seems to have retained something of his old detestation of that republic; for at midsummer, when he was in the full career of his Italian conquests, he wrote to Faypoult, the French envoy at Genoa, urging him to keep open certain cases that were in dispute, and three weeks later he again wrote that the time for Genoa had not yet come. Any definite action against this wealthy city was, indeed, most undesirable during the campaign; for the bankers of Genoa supplied the French army with the sinews of war by means of secret loans, and their merchants were equally complaisant in regard to provisions. These services were appreciated by Bonaparte as much as they were resented by Nelson; and possibly the succour which Genoese money and shipping covertly rendered to the French expeditions for the recovery of Corsica may have helped to efface from Bonaparte's memory the associations clustering around the once-revered name of Paoli. From ill-concealed hostility he drifted into a position of tolerance and finally of friend-

[1] It would even seem, from Bonaparte's letter of July 12th, 1797, that not till then did he deign to send on to Paris the terms of the treaty with Venice. He accompanied it with the cynical suggestion that they could do what they liked with the treaty, and even annul it!

ship towards Genoa, provided that she became democratic. If her institutions could be assimilated to those of France, she might prove a valuable intermediary or ally.

The destruction of the Genoese oligarchy presented no great difficulties. Both Venice and Genoa had long outlived their power, and the persistent violation of their neutrality had robbed them of that last support of the weak, self-respect. The intrigues of Faypoult and Salicetti were undermining the influence of the Doge and Senate, when the news of the fall of the Venetian oligarchy spurred on the French party to action. But the Doge and Senate armed bands of mountaineers and fishermen who were hostile to change; and in a long and desperate conflict in the narrow streets of Genoa the democrats were completely worsted (May 23rd). The victors thereupon ransacked the houses of the opposing faction and found lists of names of those who were to have been proscribed, besides documents which revealed the complicity of the French agents in the rising. Bonaparte was enraged at the folly of the Genoese democrats, which deranged his plans. As he wrote to the Directory, if they had only remained quiet for a fortnight, the oligarchy would have collapsed from sheer weakness. The murder of a few Frenchmen and Milanese now gave him an excuse for intervention. He sent an aide-de-camp, Lavalette, charged with a vehement diatribe against the Doge and Senate, which lost nothing in its recital before that august body. At the close a few senators called out, "Let us fight": but the spirit of the Dorias flickered away with these protests; and the degenerate scions of mighty sires submitted to the insults of an aide-de-camp and the dictation of his master.

The fate of this ancient republic was decided by Bonaparte at the Castle of Montebello, near Milan, where he had already drawn up her future constitution. After brief conferences with the Genoese envoys, he signed with them the secret convention which placed their republic—soon to be renamed the Ligurian Republic—under the protection of France and substituted for the

close patrician rule a moderate democracy. The fact is significant. His military instincts had now weaned him from the stiff Jacobinism of his youth; and, in conjunction with Faypoult and the envoys, he arranged that the legislative powers should be intrusted to two popularly elected chambers of 300 and 150 members, while the executive functions were to be discharged by twelve senators, presided over by a Doge; these officers were to be appointed by the chambers: for the rest, the principles of religious liberty and civic equality were recognized, and local self-government was amply provided for. Cynics may, of course, object that this excellent constitution was but a means of insuring French supremacy and of peacefully installing Bonaparte's regiments in a very important city; but the close of his intervention may be pronounced as creditable to his judgment as its results were salutary to Genoa. He even upbraided the demagogic party of that city for shivering in pieces the statue of Andrea Doria and suspending the fragments on some of the innumerable trees of liberty recently planted.

"Andrea Doria," he wrote, "was a great sailor and a great statesman. Aristocracy was liberty in his time. The whole of Europe envies your city the honour of having produced that celebrated man. You will, I doubt not, take pains to rear his statue again: I pray you to let me bear a part of the expense which that will entail, which I desire to share with those who are most zealous for the glory and welfare of your country."

In contrasting this wise and dignified conduct with the hatred which most Corsicans still cherished against Genoa, Bonaparte's greatness of soul becomes apparent and inspires the wish: *Utinam semper sic fuisses!*

Few periods of his life have been more crowded with momentous events than his sojourn at the Castle of Montebello in May-July, 1797. Besides completing the downfall of Venice and reinvigorating the life of Genoa, he was deeply concerned with the affairs of the Lombard or Cisalpine Republic, with his family concerns,

with the consolidation of his own power in French politics, and with the Austrian negotiations. We will consider these affairs in the order here indicated.

The future of Lombardy had long been a matter of concern to Bonaparte. He knew that its people were the fittest in all Italy to benefit by constitutional rule, but it must be dependent on France. He felt little confidence in the Lombards if left to themselves, as is seen in his conversation with Melzi and Miot de Melito at the Castle of Montebello. He was in one of those humours, frequent at this time of dawning splendour, when confidence in his own genius betrayed him into quite piquant indiscretions. After referring to the Directory, he turned abruptly to Melzi, a Lombard nobleman:

"As for your country, Monsieur de Melzi, it possesses still fewer elements of republicanism than France, and can be managed more easily than any other. You know better than anyone that we shall do what we like with Italy. But the time has not yet come. We must give way to the fever of the moment. We are going to have one or two republics here of our own sort. Monge will arrange that for us."

He had some reason for distrusting the strength of the democrats in Italy. At the close of 1796 he had written that there were three parties in Lombardy, one which accepted French guidance, another which desired liberty even with some impatience, and a third faction, friendly to the Austrians: he encouraged the first, checked the second, and repressed the last. He now complained that the Cispadanes and Cisalpines had behaved very badly in their first elections, which had been conducted in his absence; for they had allowed clerical influence to override all French predilections. And, a little later, he wrote to Talleyrand that the genuine love of liberty was feeble in Italy, and that, as soon as French influences were withdrawn, the Italian Jacobins would be murdered by the populace. The sequel was to justify his misgivings, and therefore to refute the charges of those

who see in his conduct respecting the Cisalpine Republic nothing but calculating egotism. The difficulty of freeing a populace that had learnt to hug its chains was so great that the temporary and partial success which his new creation achieved may be regarded as a proof of his political sagacity.

After long preparations by four committees, which Bonaparte kept at Milan closely engaged in the drafting of laws, the constitution of the Cisalpine Republic was completed. It was a miniature of that of France, and lest there should be any further mistakes in the elections, Bonaparte himself appointed, not only the five Directors and the Ministers whom they were to control, but even the 180 legislators, both Ancients and Juniors. In this strange fashion did democracy descend on Italy, not mainly as the work of the people, but at the behest of a great organizing genius. It is only fair to add that he summoned to the work of civic reconstruction many of the best intellects of Italy. He appointed a noble, Serbelloni, to be the first President of the Cisalpine Republic, and a scion of the august House of the Visconti was sent as its ambassador to Paris. Many able men that had left Lombardy during the Austrian occupation or the recent wars were attracted back by Bonaparte's politic clemency; and the festival of July 9th at Milan, which graced the inauguration of the new Government, presented a scene of civic joy to which that unhappy province had long been a stranger. A vast space was thronged with an enormous crowd which took up the words of the civic oath uttered by the President. The Archbishop of Milan celebrated Mass and blessed the banners of the National Guards; and the day closed with games, dances, and invocations to the memory of the Italians who had fought and died for their nascent liberties. Amidst all the vivas and the clash of bells Bonaparte took care to sound a sterner note. On that very day he ordered the suppression of a Milanese club which had indulged in Jacobinical extravagances, and he called on the people "to show to the

world by their wisdom, energy, and by the good organization of their army, that modern Italy has not degenerated and is still worthy of liberty."

The contagion of Milanese enthusiasm spread rapidly. Some of the Venetian towns on the mainland now petitioned for union with the Cisalpine Republic; and the deputies of the Cispadane, who were present at the festival, urgently begged that their little State might enjoy the same privilege. Hitherto Bonaparte had refused these requests, lest he should hamper the negotiations with Austria, which were still tardily proceeding; but within a month their wish was gratified, and the Cispadane State was united to the larger and more vigorous republic north of the River Po, along with the important districts of Como, Bergamo, Brescia, Crema, and Peschiera. Disturbances in the Swiss district of the Valteline soon enabled Bonaparte to intervene on behalf of the oppressed peasants, and to merge this territory also in the Cisalpine Republic, which consequently stretched from the high Alps southward to Rimini, and from the Ticino on the west to the Mincio on the east.[1]

Already, during his sojourn at the Castle of Montebello, Bonaparte figured as the all-powerful proconsul of the French Republic. Indeed, all his surroundings—his retinue of complaisant generals, and the numerous envoys and agents who thronged his ante-chambers to beg an audience—befitted a Sulla or a Wallenstein, rather than a general of the regicide Republic. Three hundred Polish soldiers guarded the approaches to the castle; and semi-regal state was also observed in its spacious corridors and saloons. There were to be seen Italian nobles, literati, and artists, counting it the highest honour to visit the liberator of their land; and to them Bonaparte behaved with that mixture of affability and inner reserve,

[1] The name *Italian* was rejected by Bonaparte as too aggressively nationalist; but the prefix *Cis*—applied to a State which stretched southward to the Rubicon—was a concession to Italian nationality. It implied that Florence or Rome was the natural capital of the new State.

of seductive charm alternating with incisive cross-examination which proclaimed at once the versatility of his gifts, the keenness of his intellect, and his determination to gain social, as well as military and political, supremacy. And yet the occasional abruptness of his movements, and the strident tones of command lurking beneath his silkiest speech, now and again reminded beholders that he was of the camp rather than of the court. To his generals he was distant; for any fault even his favourite officers felt the full force of his anger; and aides-de-camp were not often invited to dine at his table. Indeed, he frequently dined before his retinue, almost in the custom of the old Kings of France.

With him was his mother, also his brothers, Joseph and Louis, whom he was rapidly advancing to fortune. There, too, were his sisters; Elise, proud and self-contained, who at this period married a noble but somewhat boorish Corsican, Bacciocchi; and Pauline, a charming girl of sixteen, whose hand the all-powerful brother offered to Marmont, to be by him unaccountably refused, owing, it would seem, to a prior attachment.[1] This lively and luxurious young creature was not long to remain unwedded. The adjutant-general, Leclerc, became her suitor; and, despite his obscure birth and meagre talents, speedily gained her as his bride. Bonaparte granted her 40,000 francs as her dowry; and—significant fact—the nuptials were privately blessed by a priest in the chapel of the Palace of Montebello.

There, too, at Montebello was Josephine.

Certainly the Bonapartes were not happy in their loves: the one dark side to the young conqueror's life, all through this brilliant campaign, was the cruelty of his bride. From her side he had in March, 1796, torn himself away, distracted between his almost insane love for her and his determination to crush the chief enemy of France: to her he had written long and tender letters even amidst the superhuman activities of his campaign. Ten long despatches a day had not prevented him covering as

[1] Marmont, "Mems.," vol. i., p. 286.

many sheets of paper with protestations of devotion to her and with entreaties that she would likewise pour out her heart to him. Then came complaints, some tenderly pleading, others passionately bitter, of her cruelly rare and meagre replies. The sad truth, that Josephine cares much for his fame and little for him himself, that she delays coming to Italy, these and other afflicting details rend his heart. At last she comes to Milan, after a passionate outburst of weeping—at leaving her beloved Paris. In Italy she shows herself scarcely more than affectionate to her doting spouse. Marlborough's letters to his peevish duchess during the Blenheim campaign are not more crowded with maudlin curiosities than those of the fierce scourge of the Austrians to his heartless fair. He writes to her agonizingly, begging her to be less lovely, less gracious, less good—apparently in order that he may love her less madly: but she is never to be jealous, and, above all, never to weep: for her tears burn his blood: and he concludes by sending millions of kisses, and also to her dog! And this mad effusion came from the man whom the outside world took to be of steel-like coldness: yet his nature had this fevered, passionate side, just as the moon, where she faces the outer void, is compact of ice, but turns a front of molten granite to her blinding, all-compelling luminary.

Undoubtedly this blazing passion helped to spur on the lover to that terrific energy which makes the Italian campaign unique even amidst the Napoleonic wars. Beaulieu, Würmser, and Alvintzy were not rivals in war; they were tiresome hindrances to his unsated love. On the eve of one of his greatest triumphs he penned to her the following rhapsody:

"I am far from you, I seem to be surrounded by the blackest night: I need the lurid light of the thunder-bolts which we are about to hurl on our enemies to dispel the darkness into which your absence has plunged me. Josephine, you wept when we parted: you wept! At that thought all my being trembles. But be consoled! Würmser shall pay dearly for the tears which I have seen you shed."

What infatuation! to appease a woman's fancied grief, he will pile high the plains of Mincio with corpses, recking not of the thousand homes where bitter tears will flow. It is the apotheosis of sentimental egotism and social callousness. And yet this brain, with its moral vision hopelessly blurred, judged unerringly in its own peculiar plane. What power it must have possessed, that, unexhausted by the flames of love, it grasped infallibly the myriad problems of war, scanning them the more clearly, perchance, in the white heat of its own passion.

At last there came the time of fruition at Montebello: of fruition, but not of ease or full contentment; for not only did an average of eight despatches a day claim several hours, during which he jealously guarded his solitude; but Josephine's behaviour served to damp his ardour. As, during the time of absence, she had slighted his urgent entreaties for a daily letter, so too, during the sojourn at Montebello, she revealed the shallowness and frivolity of her being. Fêtes, balls, and receptions, provided they were enlivened by a light crackle of compliments from an admiring circle, pleased her more than the devotion of a genius. She had admitted, before marriage, that her "Creole *nonchalance*" shrank wearily away from his keen and ardent nature; and now, when torn away from the *salons* of Paris, she seems to have taken refuge in entertainments and lap-dogs.[1] Doubtless even at this period Josephine evinced something of that warm feeling which deepened with ripening years and lit up her later sorrows with a mild radiance; but her recent association with Madame Tallien and that giddy *cohue* had accentuated her habits of feline complaisance to all and sundry. Her facile fondnesses certainly welled forth far too widely to carve out a single channel of love and mingle with the deep torrent of Bonaparte's early passion. In time, therefore, his affections strayed into many other courses; and it would seen that even in the later part of

[1] See Arnault's "Souvenirs d'un sexagénaire" (vol. iii., p. 31) and Levy's "Napoléon intime," p. 131.

this Italian epoch his conduct was irregular. For this Josephine had herself mainly to thank. At last she awakened to the real value and greatness of the love which her neglect had served to dull and tarnish, but then it was too late for complete reunion of souls: the Corsican eagle had by that time soared far beyond reach of her highest flutterings.[1]

At Montebello, as also at Passeriano, whither the Austrian negotiations were soon transferred, Bonaparte, though strictly maintaining the ceremonies of his pro-consular court, yet showed the warmth of his social instincts. After the receptions of the day and the semi-public dinner, he loved to unbend in the evening. Sometimes, when Josephine formed a party of ladies for *vingt-et-un*, he would withdraw to a corner and indulge in the game of *goose;* and bystanders noted with amusement that his love of success led him to play tricks and cheat in order not to "fall into the pit." At other times,

[1] For the subjoined version of the accompanying new letter of Bonaparte (referred to in my Preface) I am indebted to Mr. H. A. L. Fisher, in the "Eng. Hist. Rev.," July, 1900:

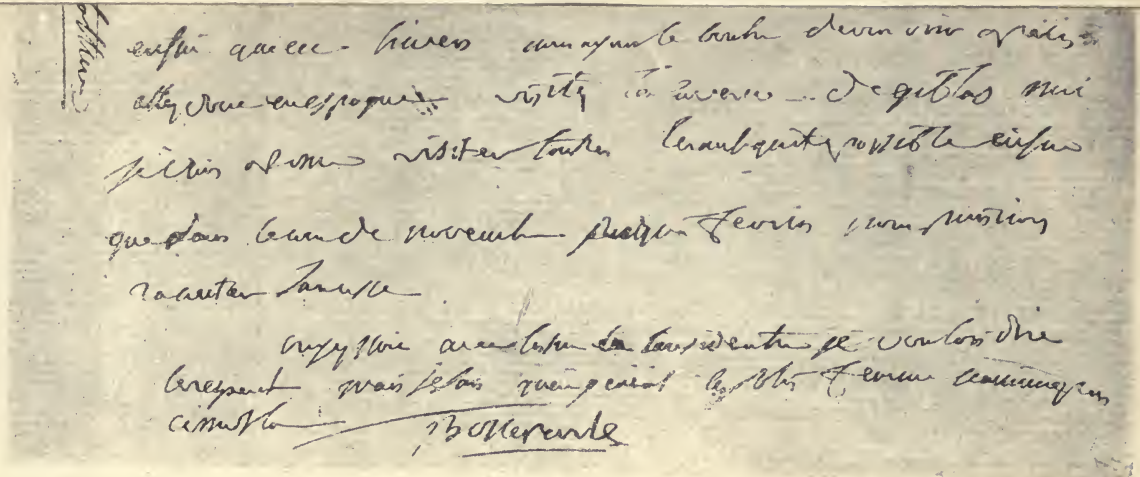
"Milan, 29 Thermidor [l'an IV.]

"À LA CITOYENNE TALLIEN

"Je vous dois des remerciements, belle citoyenne, pour le souvenir que vous me conservez et pour les choses aimables contenues dans votre apostille. Je sais bien qu'en vous disant que je regrette les moments heureux que j'ai passé dans votre société je ne vous répète que ce que tout le monde vous dit. Vous connaître c'est ne plus pouvoir vous oublier: être loin de votre aimable personne lorsque l'on a goûté les charmes de votre société c'est désirer vivement de s'en rapprócher; mais l'on dit que vous allez en Espagne. Fi! c'est très vilain à moins que vous ne soyez de retour avant trois mois, enfin que cet hiver nous ayons le bonheur de vous voir à Paris. Allez donc en Espagne visiter la caverne de Gil Blas. Moi je crois aussi visiter toutes les antiquités possibles, enfin que dans le cours de novembre jusqu'à février nous puissions raconter sans cesse. Croyez-moi avec toute la considération, je voulais dire le respect, mais je sais qu'en général les jolies femmes n'aiment pas ce mot-là.

"BONAPARTE.

"Mille e mille chose à Tallien."



if the conversation languished, he proposed that each person should tell a story; and when no Boccaccio-like facility inspired the company, he sometimes launched out into one of those eerie and thrilling recitals, such as he must often have heard from the *improvisatori* of his native island. Bourrienne states that Bonaparte's realism required darkness and daggers for the full display of his gifts, and that the climax of his dramatic monologue was not seldom enhanced by the screams of the ladies, a consummation which gratified rather than perturbed the accomplished actor.

A survey of Bonaparte's multifarious activity in Italy enables the reader to realize something of the wonder and awe excited by his achievements. Like an Athena he leaped forth from the Revolution, fully armed for every kind of contest. His mental superiority impressed diplomats as his strategy baffled the Imperialist generals; and now he was to give further proofs of his astuteness by intervening in the internal affairs of France.

In order to understand Bonaparte's share in the *coup d'état* of Fructidor, we must briefly review the course of political events at Paris. At the time of the installation of the Directory the hope was widely cherished that the Revolution was now entirely a thing of the past. But the unrest of the time was seen in the renewal of the royalist revolts in the west, and in the communistic plot of Babeuf for the overthrow of the whole existing system of private property. The aims of these desperadoes were revealed by an accomplice; the ringleaders were arrested, and after a long trial Babeuf was guillotined and his confederates were transported (May, 1797). The disclosure of these ultra-revolutionary aims shocked not only the bourgeois, but even the peasants who were settled on the confiscated lands of the nobles and clergy. The very class which had given to the events of 1789 their irresistible momentum was now inclined to rest and be thankful; and in this swift revulsion of popular feeling the royalists began to gain

ground. The elections for the renewal of a third part of the Councils resulted in large gains for them, and they could therefore somewhat influence the composition of the Directory by electing Barthélemy, a constitutional royalist. Still, he could not overbear the other four regicide Directors, even though one of these, Carnot, also favoured moderate opinions more and more. A crisis therefore rapidly developed between the still Jacobinical Directory and the two legislative Councils, in each of which the royalists, or moderates, had the upper hand. The aim of this majority was to strengthen the royalist elements in France by the repeal of many revolutionary laws. Their man of action was Pichegru, the conqueror of Holland, who, abjuring Jacobinism, now schemed with a club of royalists, which met at Clichy, on the outskirts of Paris. That their intrigues aimed at the restoration of the Bourbons had recently been proved. The French agents in Venice seized the Comte d'Entraigues, the confidante of the *soi-disant* Louis XVIII.; and his papers, when opened by Bonaparte, Clarke, and Berthier at Montebello, proved that there was a conspiracy in France for the recall of the Bourbons. With characteristic skill, Bonaparte held back these papers from the Directory until he had mastered the difficulties of the situation. As for the count, he released him; and in return for this signal act of clemency, then very unusual towards an *émigré*, he soon became the object of his misrepresentation and slander.

The political crisis became acute in July, when the majority of the Councils sought to force on the Directory Ministers who would favour moderate or royalist aims. Three Directors, Barras, La Réveillière-Lépeaux, and Rewbell, refused to listen to these behests, and insisted on the appointment of Jacobinical Ministers even in the teeth of a majority of the Councils. This defiance of the deputies of France was received with execration by most civilians, but with jubilant acclaim by the armies; for the soldiery, far removed from the partisan strifes of the capital, still retained their strongly

republican opinions. The news that their conduct towards Venice was being sharply criticised by the moderates in Paris aroused their strongest feelings, military pride and democratic ardour.

Nevertheless, Bonaparte's conduct was eminently cautious and reserved. In the month of May he sent to Paris his most trusted aide-de-camp, Lavalette, instructing him to sound all parties, to hold aloof from all engagements, and to report to him dispassionately on the state of public opinion.[1] Lavalette judged the position of the Directory, or rather of the Triumvirate which swayed it, to be so precarious that he cautioned his chief against any definite espousal of its cause; and in June-July, 1797, Bonaparte almost ceased to correspond with the Directors except on Italian affairs, probably because he looked forward to their overthrow as an important step towards his own supremacy. There was, however, the possibility of a royalist reaction sweeping all before it in France and ranging the armies against the civil power. He therefore waited and watched, fully aware of the enhanced importance which an uncertain situation gives to the outsider who refuses to show his hand.

Duller eyes than his had discerned that the constitutional conflict between the Directory and the Councils could not be peaceably adjusted. The framers of the constitution had designed the slowly changing Directory as a check on the Councils, which were renewed to the extent of one-third every year; but, while seeking to put a regicide drag on the parliamentary coach, they had omitted to provide against a complete overturn. The Councils could not legally override the Directory; neither could the Directory veto the decrees of the Councils, nor, by dissolving them, compel an appeal to the country. This defect in the constitution had been clearly pointed out by Necker, and it now drew from Barras the lament:

[1] Lavalette, "Méms.," ch. xiii.; Barras, "Méms.," vol. ii., pp. 511-512; and Duchesse d'Abrantès, "Mems.," vol. i., ch. xxviii.

"Ah, if the constitution of the Year III., which offers so many sage precautions, had not neglected one of the most important; if it had foreseen that the two great powers of the State, engaged in heated debates, must end with open conflicts, when there is no high court of appeal to arrange them; if it had sufficiently armed the Directory with the right of dissolving the Chamber!" [1]

As it was, the knot had to be severed by the sword: not, as yet, by Bonaparte's trenchant blade: he carefully drew back; but where as yet he feared to tread, Hoche rushed in. This ardently republican general was inspired by a self-denying patriotism, that flinched not before odious duties. While Bonaparte was culling laurels in Northern Italy, Hoche was undertaking the most necessary task of quelling the Vendéan risings, and later on braved the fogs and storms of the Atlantic in the hope of rousing all Ireland in revolt. His expedition to Bantry Bay in December, 1796, having miscarried, he was sent into the Rhineland. The conclusion of peace by Bonaparte at Leoben again dashed his hopes, and he therefore received with joy the orders of the Directory that he should march a large part of his army to Brest for a second expedition to Ireland. The Directory, however, intended to use those troops nearer home, and appointed him Minister of War (July 16th). The choice was a good one; Hoche was active, able, and popular with the soldiery; but he had not yet reached the thirtieth year of his age, the limit required by the constitution. On this technical defect the majority of the Councils at once fastened; and their complaints were redoubled when a large detachment of his troops came within the distance of the capital forbidden to the army. The moderates could therefore accuse the triumvirs and Hoche of conspiracy against the laws; he speedily resigned the Ministry (July 22nd), and withdrew his troops into Champagne, and finally to the Rhineland.

[1] Barras, "Méms.," vol. ii., ch. xxxi.; Madame de Staël, "Directoire," ch. viii.

Now was the opportunity for Bonaparte to take up the *rôle* of Cromwell which Hoche had so awkwardly played. And how skilfully the conqueror of Italy plays it—through subordinates. He was too well versed in statecraft to let his sword flash before the public gaze. By this time he had decided to act, and doubtless the fervid Jacobinism of the soldiery was the chief cause determining his action. At the national celebration on July 14th he allowed it to have free vent, and thereupon wrote to the Directory, bitterly reproaching them for their weakness in face of the royalist plot: "I see that the Clichy Club means to march over my corpse to the destruction of the Republic." He ended the diatribe by his usual device, when he desired to remind the Government of his necessity to them, of offering his resignation, in case they refused to take vigorous measures against the malcontents. Yet even now his action was secret and indirect. On July 27th he sent to the Directors a brief note stating that Augereau had requested leave to go to Paris, "where his affairs call him"; and that he sent by this general the originals of the addresses of the army, avowing its devotion to the constitution. No one would suspect from this that Augereau was in Bonaparte's confidence and came to carry out the *coup d'état*. The secret was well preserved. Lavalette was Bonaparte's official representative; and his neutrality was now maintained in accordance with a note received from his chief: "Augereau is coming to Paris: do not put yourself in his power: he has sown disorder in the army: he is a factious man."

But, while Lavalette was left to trim his sails as best he might, Augereau was certain to act with energy. Bonaparte knew well that his Jacobinical lieutenant, famed as the first swordsman of the day, and the leader of the fighting division of the army, would do his work thoroughly, always vaunting his own prowess and decrying that of his commander. It was so. Augereau rushed to Paris, breathing threats of slaughter against the royalists. Checked for a time by the calculating

finesse of the triumvirs, he prepared to end matters by a single blow; and, when the time had come, he occupied the strategic points of the capital, drew a cordon of troops round the Tuileries, where the Councils sat, invaded the chambers of deputies and consigned to the Temple the royalists and moderates there present, with their leader, Pichegru. Barthélemy was also seized; but Carnot, warned by a friend, fled during the early hours of this eventful day—September 4th (or 18 Fructidor). The mutilated Councils forthwith annulled the late elections in forty-nine Departments, and passed severe laws against orthodox priests and the unpardoned *émigrés* who had ventured to return to France. The Directory was also intrusted with complete power to suppress newspapers, to close political clubs, and to declare any commune in a state of siege. Its functions were now wellnigh as extensive and absolute as those of the Committee of Public Safety, its powers being limited only by the incompetence of the individual Directors and by their paralyzing consciousness that they ruled only by favour of the army. They had taken the sword to solve a political problem: two years later they were to fall by that sword.[1]

Augereau fully expected that he would be one of the two Directors who were elected in place of Carnot and Barthélemy; but the Councils had no higher opinion of his civic capacity than Bonaparte had formed; and, to his great disgust, Merlin of Douai and François of Neufchâtel were chosen. The last scenes of the *coup d'état* centred around the transportation of the condemned deputies. One of the early memories of the future Duc de Broglie recalled the sight of the "*députés fructidorisés* travelling in closed carriages, railed up like cages," to the seaport whence they were to sail to the lingering agonies of a tropical prison in French Guiana.

It was a painful spectacle: the indignation was great, but the consternation was greater still. Everybody

[1] "Mémoires de Gohier"; Roederer, "Œuvres," tome iii., p. 294.

foresaw the renewal of the Reign of Terror and resignedly prepared for it."

Such were the feelings, even of those who, like Madame de Staël and her friend Benjamin Constant, had declared before the *coup d'état* that it was necessary to the salvation of the Republic. That accomplished woman was endowed with nearly every attribute of genius except political foresight and self-restraint. No sooner had the blow been dealt than she fell to deploring its results, which any fourth-rate intelligence might have foreseen. "Liberty was the only power really conquered"—such was her later judgment on Fructidor. Now that Liberty fled affrighted, the errant enthusiasms of the gifted authoress clung for a brief space to Bonaparte. Her eulogies on his exploits, says Lavalette, who listened to her through a dinner in Talleyrand's rooms, possessed all the mad disorder and exaggeration of inspiration; and, after the repast was over, the votaress refused to pass out before an aide-de-camp of Bonaparte! The incident is characteristic both of Madame de Staël's moods and of the whims of the populace. Amidst the disenchantments of that time, when the pursuit of liberty seemed but an idle quest, when royalists were the champions of parliamentary rule and republicans relied on military force, all eyes turned wearily away from the civic broils at Paris to the visions of splendour revealed by the conqueror of Italy. Few persons knew how largely their new favourite was responsible for the events of Fructidor; all of them had by heart the names of his victories; and his popularity flamed to the skies when he recrossed the Alps, bringing with him a lucrative peace with Austria.

The negotiations with that Power had dragged on slowly through the whole summer and far into the autumn, mainly owing to the hopes of the Emperor Francis that the disorder in France would filch from her the meed of victory. Doubtless that would have been the case, had not Bonaparte, while striking down the royalists at Paris through his lieutenant, remained

at the head of his victorious legions in Venetia ready again to invade Austria, if occasion should arise.

In some respects, the *coup d'état* of Fructidor helped on the progress of the negotiations. That event postponed, if it did not render impossible, the advent of civil war in France; and, like Pride's Purge in our civil strifes, it installed in power a Government which represented the feelings of the army and of its chief. Moreover, it rid him of the presence of Clarke, his former colleague in the negotiations, whose relations with Carnot aroused the suspicions of Barras and led to his recall. Bonaparte was now the sole plenipotentiary of France. The final negotiations with Austria and the resulting treaty of Campo Formio may therefore be considered as almost entirely his handiwork.

And yet, at this very time, the head of the Foreign Office at Paris was a man destined to achieve the greatest diplomatic reputation of the age. Charles Maurice de Talleyrand seemed destined for the task of uniting the society of the old *régime* with the France of the Revolution. To review his life would be to review the Revolution. With a reforming zeal begotten of his own intellectual acuteness and of resentment against his family, which had disinherited him for the crime of lameness, he had led the first assaults of 1789 against the privileges of the nobles and of the clerics among whom his lot had perforce been cast. He acted as the head of the new "constitutional" clergy, and bestowed his episcopal blessing at the Feast of Pikes in 1790; but, owing to his moderation, he soon fell into disfavour with the extreme men who seized on power. After a sojourn in England and the United States, he came back to France, and on the suggestion of Madame de Staël was appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs (July, 1797). To this post he brought the highest gifts: his early clerical training gave a keen edge to an intellect naturally subtle and penetrating: his intercourse with Mirabeau gave him a grip on the essentials of sound policy and diplomacy: his sojourn abroad widened his vision, and imbued him

with an admiration for English institutions and English moderation. Yet he loved France with a deep and fervent love. For her he schemed; for her he threw over friends or foes with a Macchiavellian facility. Amidst all the glamour of the Napoleonic Empire he discerned the dangers that threatened France; and he warned his master —as uselessly as he warned reckless nobles, priestly bigots, and fanatical Jacobins in the past, or the unteachable zealots of the restored monarchy. His life, when viewed, not in regard to its many sordid details, but to its chief guiding principle, was one long campaign against French *élan* and partisan obstinacy; and he sealed it with the quaint declaration in his will that, on reviewing his career, he found he had never abandoned a party before it had abandoned itself. Talleyrand was equipped with a diversity of gifts: his gaze, intellectual yet composed, blenched not when he uttered a scathing criticism or a diplomatic lie: his deep and penetrating voice gave force to all his words, and the curl of his lip or the scornful lifting of his eyebrows sometimes disconcerted an opponent more than his biting sarcasm. In brief, this disinherited noble, this unfrocked priest, this disenchanted Liberal, was the complete expression of the inimitable society of the old *régime*, when quickened intellectually by Voltaire and dulled by the Terror. After doing much to destroy the old society, he was now to take a prominent share in its reconstruction on a modern basis.[1]

Such was the man who now commenced his chief life-work, the task of guiding Napoleon. "The mere name of Bonaparte is an aid which ought to smooth away all my difficulties"—these were the obsequious terms in which he began his correspondence with the great general. In reality, he distrusted him; but whether from diffidence, or from the weakness of his own position, which as yet was little more than that of the head clerk of his department, he did nothing to assert the predominance of civil

[1] Brougham, "Sketches of Statesmen"; Ste. Beuve, "Talleyrand"; Lady Blennerhasset, "Talleyrand."

over military influence in the negotiations now proceeding.

Two months before Talleyrand accepted office, Bonaparte had enlarged his original demands on Austria, and claimed for France the whole of the lands on the left or west bank of the Rhine, and for the Cisalpine Republic all the territory up to the River Adige. To these demands the Court of Vienna offered a tenacious resistance which greatly irritated him. "These people are so slow," he exclaimed, "they think that a peace like this ought to be meditated upon for three years first."

Concurrently with the Franco-Austrian negotiations, overtures for a peace between France and England were being discussed at Lille. Into these it is impossible to enter farther than to notice that in these efforts Pitt and the other British Ministers (except Grenville) were sincerely desirous of peace, and that negotiations broke down owing to the masterful tone adopted by the Directory. It was perhaps unfortunate that Lord Malmesbury was selected as the English negotiator, for his behaviour in the previous year had been construed by the French as dilatory and insincere. But the Directors may on better evidence be charged with postponing a settlement until they had struck down their foes within France. Bonaparte's letters at this time show that he hoped for the conclusion of a peace with England, doubtless in order that his own pressure on Austria might be redoubled. In this he was to be disappointed. After Fructidor the Directory assumed overweening airs. Talleyrand was bidden to enjoin on the French plenipotentiaries the adoption of a loftier tone. Maret, the French envoy at Lille, whose counsels had ever been on the side of moderation, was abruptly replaced by a "Fructidorian"; and a decisive refusal was given to the English demand for the retention of Trinidad and the Cape, at the expense of Spain and the Batavian Republic respectively. Indeed, the Directory intended to press for the cession of the Channel Islands to France and of

Gibraltar to Spain, and that, too, at the end of a maritime war fruitful in victories for the Union Jack.[1]

Towards the King of Sardinia the new Directory was equally imperious. The throne of Turin was now occupied by Charles Emmanuel IV. He succeeded to a troublous heritage. Threatened by democratic republics at Milan and Genoa, and still more by the effervescence of his own subjects, he strove to gain an offensive and defensive alliance with France, as the sole safeguard against revolution. To this end he offered 10,000 Piedmontese for service with Bonaparte, and even secretly covenanted to cede the island of Sardinia to France. But these offers could not divert Barras and his colleagues from their revolutionary policy. They spurned the alliance with the House of Savoy, and, despite the remonstrances of Bonaparte, they fomented civil discords in Piedmont such as endangered his communications with France. Indeed, the Directory after Fructidor was deeply imbued with fear of their commander in Italy. To increase his difficulties was now their para-

[1] Instructions of Talleyrand to the French envoys (September 11th); also Ernouf's "Maret, Duc de Bassano," chs. xxvii. and xxviii., for the *bona fides* of Pitt in these negotiations.

It seems strange that Baron du Casse, in his generally fair treatment of the English case, in his "Négociations relatives aux Traités de Lunéville et d'Amiens," should have prejudiced his readers at the outset by referring to a letter which he attributes to Lord Malmesbury. It bears no date, no name, and purports to be "Une Lettre de Lord Malmesbury, oubliée à Lille." How could the following sentences have been penned by Malmesbury, and written to Lord Grenville?—"Mais enfin, outre les regrets sincères de Méot et des danseuses de l'Opéra, j'eus la consolation de voir en quittant Paris, que des Français et une multitude de nouveaux convertés à la réligion catholique m'accompagnaient de leurs vœux, de leurs prières, et presque de leurs larmes. . . . L'évènement de Fructidor porta la désolation dans le cœur de tous les bons ennemis de la France. Pour ma part, j'en fut consterné: *je ne l'avais point prévu.*" It is obviously the clumsy fabrication of a Fructidorian, designed for Parisian consumption: it was translated by a Whig pamphleteer under the title "The Voice of Truth!"—a fit sample of that partisan malevolence which distorted a great part of our political literature in that age.

mount desire; and under the pretext of extending liberty in Italy, they instructed Talleyrand to insist on the inclusion of Venice and Friuli in the Cisalpine Republic. Austria must be content with Trieste, Istria, and Dalmatia, must renounce all interest in the fate of the Ionian Isles, and find in Germany all compensation for her losses in Italy. Such was the ultimatum of the Directory (September 16th). But a loophole of escape was left to Bonaparte; the conduct of these negotiations was confided solely to him, and he had already decided their general tenor by giving his provisional assent to the acquisition by Austria of the east bank of the Adige and the city of Venice. From these terms he was disinclined to diverge. He was weary of "this old Europe": his gaze was directed towards Corfu, Malta, and Egypt; and when he received the official ultimatum, he saw that the Directory desired a renewal of the war under conditions highly embarrassing for him. "Yes: I see clearly that they are preparing defeats for me," he exclaimed to his aide-de-camp Lavalette. They angered him still more when, on the death of Hoche, they intrusted their Rhenish forces, numbering 120,000 men, to the command of Augereau, and sent to the Army of Italy an officer bearing a manifesto written by Augereau concerning Fructidor, which set forth the anxiety felt by the Directors concerning Bonaparte's political views. At this Bonaparte fired up and again offered his resignation (September 25th):

"No power on earth shall, after this horrible and most unexpected act of ingratitude by the Government, make me continue to serve it. My health imperiously demands calm and repose. . . . My recompense is in my conscience and in the opinion of posterity. Believe me, that at any time of danger, I shall be the first to defend the Constitution of the Year III."

The resignation was of course declined, in terms most flattering to Bonaparte; and the Directors prepared to ratify the treaty with Sardinia.

Indeed, the fit of passion once passed, the determina-

tion to dominate events again possessed him, and he decided to make peace, despite the recent instructions of the Directory that no peace would be honourable which sacrificed Venice to Austria. There is reason to believe that he now regretted this sacrifice. His passionate outbursts against Venice after the *Pâques véronaises*, his denunciations of "that fierce and blood-stained rule," had now given place to some feelings of pity for the people whose ruin he had so artfully compassed; and the social intercourse with Venetians which he enjoyed at Passeriano, the castle of the Doge Manin, may well have inspired some regard for the proud city which he was now about to barter away to Austria. Only so, however, could he peacefully terminate the wearisome negotiations with the Emperor. The Austrian envoy, Count Cobenzl, struggled hard to gain the whole of Venetia, and the Legations, along with the half of Lombardy.[1] From these exorbitant demands he was driven by the persistent vigour of Bonaparte's assaults. The little Corsican proved himself an expert in diplomatic wiles, now enticing the Imperialist on to slippery ground, and occasionally shocking him by calculated outbursts of indignation or bravado. After many days spent in intellectual fencing, the discussions were narrowed down to Mainz, Mantua, Venice, and the Ionian Isles. On the fate of these islands a stormy discussion arose, Cobenzl stipulating for their complete independence, while Bonaparte passionately claimed them for France. In one of these sallies his vehement gestures overturned a cabinet with a costly vase; but the story that he smashed the vase, as a sign of his power to crush the House of Austria, is a later refinement on the incident, about which Cobenzl merely reported to Vienna —"He behaved like a fool." Probably his dextrous disclosure of the severe terms which the Directory ordered him to extort was far more effective than this boisterous *gasconnade*. Finally, after threatening an immediate

[1] Bonaparte's letters of September 28th and October 7th to Talleyrand.

attack on the Austrian positions, he succeeded on three of the questions above named, but at the sacrifice of Venice to Austria.

The treaty was signed on October 17th at the village of Campo Formio. The published articles may be thus summarized: Austria ceded to the French Republic her Belgic provinces. Of the once extensive Venetian possessions France gained the Ionian Isles, while Austria acquired Istria, Dalmatia, the districts at the mouth of the Cattaro, the city of Venice, and the mainland of Venetia as far west as Lake Garda, the Adige, and the lower part of the River Po. The Hapsburgs recognized the independence of the now enlarged Cisalpine Republic. France and Austria agreed to frame a treaty of commerce on the basis of "the most favoured nation." The Emperor ceded to the dispossessed Duke of Modena the territory of Breisgau on the east of the Rhine. A congress was to be held at Rastadt, at which the plenipotentiaries of France and of the Germanic Empire were to regulate affairs between these two Powers.

Secret articles bound the Emperor to use his influence in the Empire to secure for France the left bank of the Rhine; while France was to use her good offices to procure for the Emperor the Archbishopric of Salzburg and the Bavarian land between that State and the River Inn. Other secret articles referred to the indemnities which were to be found in Germany for some of the potentates who suffered by the changes announced in the public treaty.

The bartering away of Venice awakened profound indignation. After more than a thousand years of independence, that city was abandoned to the Emperor by the very general who had promised to free Italy. It was in vain that Bonaparte strove to soothe the provisional government of that city through the influence of a Venetian Jew, who, after his conversion, had taken the famous name of Dandolo. Summoning him to Passeriano, he explained to him the hard necessity which now dictated the transfer of Venice to Austria. France could not now

CENTRAL EUROPE
AFTER THE PEACE OF CAMPO FORMIO, 1797

The boundaries of the Holy Roman Empire are indicated by thick dots.
The Austrian Dominions are indicated by vertical lines.
The Prussian Dominions are indicated by horizontal lines.
The Ecclesiastical States are indicated by dotted areas.

shed any more of her best blood for what was, after all, only "a moral cause": the Venetians therefore must cultivate resignation for the present and hope for the future. The advice was useless. The Venetian democrats determined on a last desperate venture. They secretly sent three deputies, among them Dandolo, with a large sum of money wherewith to bribe the Directors to reject the treaty of Campo Formio. This would have been quite practicable, had not their errand become known to Bonaparte. Alarmed and enraged at this device, which, if successful, would have consigned him to infamy, he sent Duroc in chase; and the envoys, caught before they crossed the Maritime Alps, were brought before the general at Milan. To his vehement reproaches and threats they opposed a dignified silence, until Dandolo, appealing to his generosity, awakened those nobler feelings which were never long dormant. Then he quietly dismissed them—to witness the downfall of their beloved city.

Acribus initiis, ut ferme talia, incuriosa fine; these cynical words, with which the historian of the Roman Empire blasted the movements of his age, may almost serve as the epitaph to Bonaparte's early enthusiasms. Proclaiming at the beginning of his Italian campaigns that he came to free Italy, he yet finished his course of almost unbroken triumphs by a surrender which his panegyrists have scarcely attempted to condone. But the fate of Venice was almost forgotten amidst the jubilant acclaim which greeted the conqueror of Italy on his arrival at Paris. All France rang with the praises of the hero who had spread liberty throughout Northern and Central Italy, had enriched the museums of Paris with priceless masterpieces of art, whose army had captured 150,000 prisoners, and had triumphed in 18 pitched battles—for Caldiero was now reckoned as a French victory—and 47 smaller engagements. The Directors, shrouding their hatred and fear of the masterful proconsul under their Roman togas, greeted him with uneasy effusiveness. The climax of the official comedy was

reached when, at the reception of the conqueror, Barras, pointing northwards, exclaimed: "Go there and capture the giant corsair that infests the seas: go punish in London outrages that have too long been unpunished": whereupon, as if overcome by his emotions, he embraced the general. Amidst similar attentions bestowed by the other Directors, the curtain falls on the first, or Italian, act of the young hero's career, soon to rise on oriental adventures that were to recall the exploits of Alexander.

CHAPTER VIII

EGYPT

AMONG the many misconceptions of the French revolutionists none was more insidious than the notion that the wealth and power of the British people rested on an artificial basis. This mistaken belief in England's weakness arose out of the doctrine taught by the *Economistes* or *Physiocrates* in the latter half of last century, that commerce was not of itself productive of wealth, since it only promoted the distribution of the products of the earth; but that agriculture was the sole source of true wealth and prosperity. They therefore exalted agriculture at the expense of commerce and manufactures, and the course of the Revolution, which turned largely on agrarian questions, tended in the same direction. Robespierre and St. Just were never weary of contrasting the virtues of a simple pastoral life with the corruptions and weakness engendered by foreign commerce; and when, early in 1793, Jacobinical zeal embroiled the young Republic with England, the orators of the Convention confidently prophesied the downfall of the modern Carthage. Kersaint declared that "the credit of England rests upon fictitious wealth: . . . bounded in territory, the public future of England is found almost wholly in its bank, and this edifice is entirely supported by naval commerce. It is easy to cripple this commerce, and especially so for a power like France, which stands alone on her own riches." [1]

[1] See too Marsh's "Politicks of Great Britain and France," ch. xiii.; "Correspondence of W. A. Miles on the French Revolution," letters of January 7th and January 18th, 1793; also Sybel's "Europe during the French Revolution," vol. ii.

Commercial interests played a foremost part all through the struggle. The official correspondence of Talleyrand in 1797 proves that the Directory intended to claim the Channel Islands, the north of Newfoundland, and all our conquests in the East Indies made since 1754, besides the restitution of Gibraltar to Spain.[1] Nor did these hopes seem extravagant. The financial crisis in London and the mutiny at the Nore seemed to betoken the exhaustion of England, while the victories of Bonaparte raised the power of France to heights never known before. Before the victory of Duncan over the Dutch at Camperdown (October 11th, 1797), Britain seemed to have lost her naval supremacy.

The recent admission of State bankruptcy at Paris, when two-thirds of the existing liabilities were practically expunged, sharpened the desire of the Directory to compass England's ruin, an enterprise which might serve to restore French credit and would certainly engage those vehement activities of Bonaparte that could otherwise work mischief in Paris. On his side he gladly accepted the command of the *Army of England.*

"The people of Paris do not remember anything," he said to Bourrienne. "Were I to remain here long, doing nothing, I should be lost. In this great Babylon everything wears out: my glory has already disappeared. This little Europe does not supply enough of it for me. I must seek it in the East: all great fame comes from that quarter. However, I wish first to make a tour along the [northern] coast to see for myself what may be attempted. If the success of a descent upon England appear doubtful, as I suspect it will, the Army of England shall become the Army of the East, and I go to Egypt."[2]

In February, 1798, he paid a brief visit to Dunkirk and the Flemish coast, and concluded that the invasion of England was altogether too complicated to be hazarded

[1] Pallain, "Le Ministère de Talleyrand sous le Directoire," p. 42.
[2] Bourrienne, "Memoirs," vol. i., ch. xii. See too the despatch of Sandoz-Rollin to Berlin of February 28th, 1798, in Bailleu's "Preussen und Frankreich," vol. i., No. 150.

except as a last desperate venture. In a report to the Government (February 23rd) he thus sums up the whole situation:

"Whatever efforts we make, we shall not for some years gain the naval supremacy. To invade England without that supremacy is the most daring and difficult task ever undertaken. . . . If, having regard to the present organization of our navy, it seems impossible to gain the necessary promptness of execution, then we must really give up the expedition against England, *be satisfied with keeping up the pretence of it*, and concentrate all our attention and resources on the Rhine, in order to try to deprive England of Hanover and Hamburg:[1] . . . or else undertake an eastern expedition which would menace her trade with the Indies. And if none of these three operations is practicable, I see nothing else for it but to conclude peace with England."

The greater part of his career serves as a commentary on these designs. To one or other of them he was constantly turning as alternative schemes for the subjugation of his most redoubtable foe. The first plan he now judged to be impracticable; the second, which appears later in its fully matured form as his Continental System, was not for the present feasible, because France was about to settle German affairs at the Congress of Rastadt; to the third he therefore turned the whole force of his genius.

The conquest of Egypt and the restoration to France of her supremacy in India appealed to both sides of Bonaparte's nature. The vision of the tricolour floating above the minarets of Cairo and the palace of the Great Mogul at Delhi fascinated a mind in which the mysticism of the south was curiously blent with the practicality and passion for details that characterize the northern races. To very few men in the world's history has it been granted to dream grandiose dreams and all but

[1] The italics are my own. I wish to call attention to the statement in view of the much-debated question whether in 1804-5 Napoleon intended to invade our land, *unless he gained maritime supremacy*. See Desbrière's "Projets de Débarquement aux Iles Britanniques," vol. i., *ad fin.*

realize them, to use by turns the telescope and the microscope of political survey, to plan vast combinations of force, and yet to supervise with infinite care the adjustment of every adjunct. Cæsar, in the old world, was possibly the mental peer of Bonaparte in this majestic equipoise of the imaginative and practical qualities; but of Cæsar we know comparatively little; whereas the complex workings of the greatest mind of the modern world stand revealed in that storehouse of facts and fancies, the "Correspondance de Napoléon." The motives which led to the Eastern Expedition are there unfolded. In the letter which he wrote to Talleyrand shortly before the signature of the peace of Campo Formio occurs this suggestive passage:

"The character of our nation is to be far too vivacious amidst prosperity. If we take for the basis of all our operations true policy, which is nothing else than the calculation of combinations and chances, we shall long be *la grande nation* and the arbiter of Europe. I say more: we hold the balance of Europe: we will make that balance incline as we wish; and, if such is the order of fate, I think it by no means impossible that we may in a few years attain those grand results of which the heated and enthusiastic imagination catches a glimpse, and which the extremely cool, persistent, and calculating man will alone attain."

This letter was written when Bonaparte was bartering away Venice to the Emperor in consideration of the acquisition by France of the Ionian Isles. Its reference to the vivacity of the French was doubtless evoked by the orders which he then received to "revolutionize Italy." To do that, while the Directory further extorted from England Gibraltar, the Channel Islands, and her eastern conquests, was a programme dictated by excessive vivacity. The Directory lacked the practical qualities that selected one great enterprise at a time and brought to bear on it the needful concentration of effort. In brief, he selected the war against England's eastern commerce as his next sphere of action; for it offered "an arena vaster, more necessary

and resplendent" than war with Austria; "if we compel the [British] Government to a peace, the advantages we shall gain for our commerce in both hemispheres will be a great step towards the consolidation of liberty and the public welfare."[1]

For this eastern expedition he had already prepared. In May, 1797, he had suggested the seizure of Malta from the Knights of St. John; and when, on September 27th, the Directory gave its assent, he sent thither a French commissioner, Poussielgue, on a "commercial mission," to inspect those ports, and also, doubtless, to undermine the discipline of the Knights. Now that the British had retired from Corsica, and France disposed of the maritime resources of Northern Italy, Spain, and Holland, it seemed quite practicable to close the Mediterranean to those "intriguing and enterprising islanders," to hold them at bay in their dull northern seas, to exhaust them by ruinous preparations against expected descents on their southern coasts, on Ireland, and even on Scotland, while Bonaparte's eastern conquests dried up the sources of their wealth in the Orient: "Let us concentrate all our activity on our navy and destroy England. That done, Europe is at our feet."[2]

But he encountered opposition from the Directory. They still clung to their plan of revolutionizing Italy; and only by playing on their fear of the army could he bring these civilians to assent to the expatriation of 35,000 troops and their best generals. On La Réveillière-

[1] Letter of October 10th, 1797; see too those of August 16th and September 13th.

[2] The plan of menacing diverse parts of our coasts was kept up by Bonaparte as late as April 13th, 1798. In his letter of this date he still speaks of the invasion of England and Scotland, and promises to return from Egypt in three or four months, so as to proceed with the invasion of the United Kingdom. Boulay de la Meurthe, in his work, "Le Directoire et l'Expédition d'Egypte," ch. i., seems to take this promise seriously. In any case the Directors' hopes for the invasion of Ireland were dashed by the premature rising of the Irish malcontents in May, 1798. For Poussielgue's mission to Malta, see Lavalette's "Mems.," ch. xiv.

THE THIRD CONVOY OF STATUES AND WORKS OF ART LEAVING ROME FOR THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF PARIS, 21 FLORÉAL, AN 5 - MAY 11TH, 1798

Lépeaux the young commander worked with a skill that veiled the choicest irony. This Director was the high-priest of a newly-invented cult, termed *Théo-philanthropie*, into the dull embers of which he was still earnestly blowing. To this would-be prophet Bonaparte now suggested that the eastern conquests would furnish a splendid field for the spread of the new faith; and La Réveillière was forthwith converted from his scheme of revolutionizing Europe to the grander sphere of moral proselytism opened out to him in the East by the very chief who, on landing in Egypt, forthwith professed the Moslem creed.

After gaining the doubtful assent of the Directory, Bonaparte had to face urgent financial difficulties. The dearth of money was, however, met by two opportune interventions. The first of these was in the affairs of Rome. The disorders of the preceding year in that city had culminated at Christmas in a riot in which General Duphot had been assassinated; this outrage furnished the pretext desired by the Directory for revolutionizing Central Italy. Berthier was at once ordered to lead French troops against the Eternal City. He entered without resistance (February 15th, 1798), declared the civil authority of the Pope at an end, and proclaimed the *restoration* of the Roman Republic. The practical side of the liberating policy was soon revealed. A second time the treasures of Rome, both artistic and financial, were rifled; and, as Lucien Bonaparte caustically remarked in his "Memoirs," the chief duty of the newly-appointed consuls and quæstors was to superintend the packing up of pictures and statues designed for Paris. Berthier not only laid the basis of a large private fortune, but showed his sense of the object of the expedition by sending large sums for the equipment of the armada at Toulon. "In sending me to Rome," wrote Berthier to Bonaparte, "you appoint me treasurer to the expedition against England. I will try to fill the exchequer."

The intervention of the Directory in the affairs of Switzerland was equally lucrative. The inhabitants of

the district of Vaud, in their struggles against the oppressive rule of the Bernese oligarchy, had offered to the French Government the excuse for interference: and a force invading that land, overpowered the levies of the central cantons.[1] The imposition of a centralized form of government modelled on that of France, the wresting of Geneva from this ancient confederation, and its incorporation with France, were not the only evils suffered by Switzerland. Despite the proclamation of General Brune that the French came as friends to the descendants of William Tell, and would respect their independence and their property, French commissioners proceeded to rifle the treasuries of Berne, Zürich, Solothurn, Fribourg, and Lucerne of sums which amounted in all to eight and a half million francs; fifteen millions were extorted in forced contributions and plunder, besides 130 cannon and 60,000 muskets which also became the spoils of the liberators.[2] The destination of part of the treasure was already fixed; on April 13th Bonaparte wrote an urgent letter to General Lannes, directing him to expedite the transit of the booty to Toulon, where three million francs were forthwith expended on the completion of the armada.

This letter, and also the testimony of Madame de Staël, Barras, Bourrienne, and Mallet du Pan, show that he must have been a party to this interference in Swiss affairs, which marks a debasement, not only of Bonaparte's character, but of that of the French army and people. It drew from Coleridge, who previously had seen in the Revolution the dawn of a nobler era, an indignant protest against the prostitution of the ideas of 1789:

> "Oh France that mockest Heaven, adulterous, blind,
> Are these thy boasts, champion of human kind?

[1] Mallet du Pan states that three thousand Vaudois came to Berne to join in the national defence: "Les cantons démocratiques sont les plus fanatisés contre les Français"—a suggestive remark.

[2] Dändliker, "Geschichte der Schweiz," vol. iii., p. 350 (edition of 1895); also Lavisse, "La Rév. Franç.," p. 821.

To mix with Kings in the low lust of sway,
Yell in the hunt and join the murderous prey? . . .
The sensual and the dark rebel in vain
Slaves by their own compulsion. In mad game
They burst their manacles: but wear the name
Of Freedom, graven on a heavier chain."

The occupation by French troops of the great central bastion of the European system seemed a challenge, not only to idealists, but to German potentates. It nearly precipitated a rupture with Vienna, where the French tricolour had recently been torn down by an angry crowd. But Bonaparte did his utmost to prevent a renewal of war that would blight his eastern prospects; and he succeeded. One last trouble remained. At his final visit to the Directory, when crossed about some detail, he passionately threw up his command. Thereupon Rewbell, noted for his incisive speech, drew up the form of resignation, and presenting it to Bonaparte, firmly said, "Sign, citizen general." The general did not sign, but retired from the meeting apparently crestfallen, but really meditating a *coup d'état*. This last statement rests on the evidence of Mathieu Dumas, who heard it through General Desaix, a close friend of Bonaparte; and it is clear from the narratives of Bourrienne, Barras, and Madame Junot that, during his last days in Paris, the general was moody, preoccupied, and fearful of being poisoned.

At last the time of preparation and suspense was at an end. The aims of the expedition as officially defined by a secret decree on April 12th included the capture of Egypt and the exclusion of the English from "all their possessions in the East to which the general can come"; Bonaparte was also to have the isthmus of Suez cut through; to "assure the *free and exclusive* possession of the Red Sea to the French Republic"; to improve the condition of the natives of Egypt, and to cultivate good relations with the Grand Signior. Another secret decree empowered Bonaparte to seize Malta. To these schemes he added another of truly colossal dimensions. After

conquering the East, he would rouse the Greeks and other Christians of the East, overthrow the Turks, seize Constantinople, and "take Europe in the rear."

Generous support was accorded to the *savants* who were desirous of exploring the artistic and literary treasures of Egypt and Mesopotamia. It has been affirmed by the biographer of Monge that the enthusiasm of this celebrated physicist first awakened Bonaparte's desire for the eastern expedition; but this seems to have been aroused earlier by Volney, who saw a good deal of Bonaparte in 1791. In truth, the desire to wrest the secrets of learning from the mysterious East seems always to have spurred on his keenly inquisitive nature. During the winter months of 1797-8 he attended the chemical lectures of the renowned Berthollet; and it was no perfunctory choice which selected him for the place in the famous institute left vacant by the exile of Carnot. The manner in which he now signed his orders and proclamations—Member of the Institute, General in Chief of the Army of the East—showed his determination to banish from the life of France that affectation of boorish ignorance by which the Terrorists had rendered themselves uniquely odious.

After long delays, caused by contrary winds, the armada set sail from Toulon. Along with the convoys from Marseilles, Genoa, and Civita Vecchia, it finally reached the grand total of 13 ships of the line, 7 frigates, several gunboats, and nearly 300 transports of various sizes, conveying 35,000 troops. Admiral Brueys was the admiral, but acting under Bonaparte. Of the generals whom the commander-in-chief took with him, the highest in command were the divisional generals Kléber, Desaix, Bon, Menou, Reynier, for the infantry: under them served 14 generals, a few of whom, as Marmont, were to achieve a wider fame. The cavalry was commanded by the stalwart mulatto, General Alexandre Dumas, under whom served Leclerc, the husband of Pauline Bonaparte, along with two men destined to world-wide renown, Murat and Davoust. The artillery

was commanded by Dommartin, the engineers by Caffarelli: and the heroic Lannes was quarter-master general.

The armada appeared off Malta without meeting with any incident. This island was held by the Knights of St. John, the last of those companies of Christian warriors who had once waged war on the infidels in Palestine. Their courage had evaporated in luxurious ease, and their discipline was a prey to intestine schisms and to the intrigues carried on with the French Knights of the Order. A French fleet had appeared off Valetta in the month of March in the hope of effecting a surprise; but the admiral, Brueys, judging the effort too hazardous, sent an awkward explanation, which only served to throw the knights into the arms of Russia. One of the chivalrous dreams of the Czar Paul was that of spreading his influence in the Mediterranean by a treaty with this Order. It gratified his crusading ardour and promised to Russia a naval base for the partition of Turkey which was then being discussed with Austria: to secure the control of the island, Russia was about to expend 400,000 roubles, when Bonaparte anticipated Muscovite designs by a prompt seizure.[1] An excuse was easily found for a rupture with the Order: some companies of troops were disembarked, and hostilities commenced.

Secure within their mighty walls, the knights might have held the intruders at bay, had they not been divided by internal disputes: the French knights refused to fight against their countrymen; and a revolt of the native Maltese, long restless under the yoke of the Order, now helped to bring the Grand Master to a surrender. The evidence of the English consul, Mr. Williams, seems to show that the discontent of the natives was even more potent than the influence of French gold in bringing about this result.[2] At any rate, one of the

[1] "Correspondance," No. 2676.

[2] "Foreign Office Records," Malta (No. 1). Mr. Williams states in his despatch of June 30th, 1798, that Bonaparte knew there were four thousand Maltese in his favour, and that most of the

strongest places in Europe admitted a French garrison, after so tame a defence that General Caffarelli, on viewing the fortifications, remarked to Bonaparte: "Upon my word, general, it is lucky there was some one in the town to open the gates to us."

During his stay of seven days at Malta, Bonaparte revealed the vigour of those organizing powers for which the half of Europe was soon to present all too small an arena. He abolished the Order, pensioning off those French knights who had been serviceable: he abolished the religious houses and confiscated their domains to the service of the new government: he established a governmental commission acting under a military governor: he continued provisionally the existing taxes, and provided for the imposition of customs, excise, and octroi dues: he prepared the way for the improvement of the streets, the erection of fountains, the reorganization of the hospitals and the post office. To the university he gave special attention, rearranging the curriculum on the model of the more advanced *écoles centrales* of France, but inclining the studies severely to the exact sciences and the useful arts. On all sides he left the imprint of his practical mind, that viewed life as a game at chess, whence bishops and knights were carefully banished, and wherein nothing was left but the heavy pieces and subservient pawns.

After dragging Malta out of its mediæval calm and plunging it into the full swirl of modern progress, Bonaparte set sail for Egypt. His exchequer was the richer by all the gold and silver, whether in bullion or in vessels, discoverable in the treasury of Malta or in the Church of St. John. Fortunately, the silver gates of this church had been coloured over, and thus escaped the fate of the other treasures.[1] On the voyage to Alexandria

French knights were publicly known to be so; but he adds: "I do believe the Maltees [*sic*] have given the island to the French in order to get rid of the knighthood."

[1] I am indebted for this fact to the Librarian of the Priory of the Knights of St. John, Clerkenwell.

he studied the library of books which he had requested Bourrienne to purchase for him. The composition of this library is of interest as showing the strong trend of his thoughts towards history, though at a later date he was careful to limit its study in the university and schools which he founded. He had with him 125 volumes of historical works, among which the translations of Thucydides, Plutarch, Tacitus, and Livy represented the life of the ancient world, while in modern life he concentrated his attention chiefly on the manners and institutions of peoples and the memoirs of great generals—as Turenne, Condé, Luxembourg, Saxe, Marlborough, Eugène, and Charles XII. Of the poets he selected the so-called Ossian, Tasso, Ariosto, Homer, Virgil, and the masterpieces of the French theatre; but he especially affected the turgid and declamatory style of Ossian. In romance, English literature was strongly represented by forty volumes of novels, of course in translations. Besides a few works on arts and sciences, he also had with him twelve volumes of "Barclay's Geography," and three volumes of "Cook's Voyages," which show that his thoughts extended to the antipodes; and under the heading of Politics he included the Bible, the Koran, the Vedas, a Mythology, and Montesquieu's "Esprit des Lois"! The composition and classification of this library are equally suggestive. Bonaparte carefully searched out the weak places of the organism which he was about to attack—in the present campaign, Egypt and the British Empire. The climate and natural products, the genius of its writers and the spirit of its religion—nothing came amiss to his voracious intellect, which assimilated the most diverse materials and pressed them all into his service. Greek mythology provided allusions for the adornment of his proclamations, the Koran would dictate his behaviour towards the Moslems, and the Bible was to be his guide-book concerning the Druses and Armenians. All three were therefore grouped together under the head of Politics.

And this, on the whole, fairly well represents his mental attitude towards religion: at least, it was his work-a-day attitude. There were moments, it is true, when an overpowering sense of the majesty of the universe lifted his whole being far above this petty opportunism: and in those moments, which, in regard to the declaration of character, may surely be held to counterbalance whole months spent in tactical shifts and diplomatic wiles, he was capable of soaring to heights of imaginative reverence. Such an episode, lighting up for us the recesses of his mind, occurred during his voyage to Egypt. The *savants* on board his ship, "L'Orient," were discussing one of those questions which Bonaparte often propounded, in order that, as arbiter in this contest of wits, he might gauge their mental powers. Mental dexterity, rather than the Socratic pursuit after truth, was the aim of their dialectic; but on one occasion, when religion was being discussed, Bonaparte sounded a deeper note: looking up into the midnight vault of sky, he said to the philosophizing atheists: "Very ingenious, sirs, but who made all that?" As a retort to the tongue-fencers, what could be better? The appeal away from words to the star-studded canopy was irresistible: it affords a signal proof of what Carlyle has finely called his "instinct for nature" and his "ineradicable feeling for reality." This probably was the true man, lying deep under his Moslem shifts and Concordat bargainings.

That there was a tinge of superstition in Bonaparte's nature, such as usually appears in gifted scions of a coast-dwelling family, cannot be denied;[1] but his usual attitude towards religion was that of the political mechanician, not of the devotee, and even while professing the forms of fatalistic belief, he really subordinated them to his own designs. To this profound calculation of the credulity of mankind we may probably refer his allusions to his star. The present writer re-

[1] See, for a curious instance, Chaptal, "Mes Souvenirs," p. 243.

gards it as almost certain that his star was invoked in order to dazzle the vulgar herd. Indeed, if we may trust Miot de Melito, the First Consul once confessed as much to a circle of friends. "Cæsar," he said, "was right to cite his good fortune and to appear to believe in it. That is a means of acting on the imagination of others without offending anyone's self-love." A strange admission this; what boundless self-confidence it implies that he should have admitted the trickery. The mere acknowledgment of it is a proof that he felt himself so far above the plane of ordinary mortals that, despite the disclosure, he himself would continue to be his own star. For the rest, is it credible that this analyzing genius could ever have seriously adopted the astrologer's creed? Is there anything in his early note-books or later correspondence which warrants such a belief? Do not all his references to his star occur in proclamations and addresses intended for popular consumption?

Certainly Bonaparte's good fortune was conspicuous all through these eastern adventures, and never more so than when he escaped the pursuit of Nelson. The English admiral had divined his aim. Setting all sail, he came almost within sight of the French force near Crete, and he reached Alexandria barely two days before his foes hove in sight. Finding no hostile force there, he doubled back on his course and scoured the seas between Crete, Sicily, and the Morea, until news received from a Turkish official again sent him eastwards. On such trifles does the fate of empires sometimes depend.

Meanwhile events were crowding thick and fast upon Bonaparte. To free himself from the terrible risks which had menaced his force off the Egyptian coast, he landed his troops, 35,000 strong, with all possible expedition at Marabout near Alexandria, and, directing his columns of attack on the walls of that city, captured it by a rush (July 2nd).

For this seizure of neutral territory he offered no excuse other than that the Beys, who were the real rulers

of Egypt, had favoured English commerce and were guilty of some outrages on French merchants. He strove, however, to induce the Sultan of Turkey to believe that the French invasion of Egypt was a friendly act, as it would overthrow the power of the Mamelukes, who had reduced Turkish authority to a mere shadow. This was the argument which he addressed to the Turkish officials, but it proved to be too subtle even for the oriental mind fully to appreciate. Bonaparte's chief concern was to win over the subject population, which consisted of diverse races. At the surface were the Mamelukes, a powerful military order, possessing a magnificent cavalry, governed by two Beys, and scarcely recognizing the vague suzerainty claimed by the Porte. The rivalries of the Beys, Murad and Ibrahim, produced a fertile crop of discords in this governing caste, and their feuds exposed the subject races, both Arabs and Copts, to constant forays and exactions. It seemed possible, therefore, to arouse them against the dominant caste, provided that the Mohammedan scruples of the whole population were carefully respected. To this end, the commander cautioned his troops to act towards the Moslems as towards "Jews and Italians," and to respect their muftis and imams as much as "rabbis and bishops." He also proclaimed to the Egyptians his determination, while overthrowing Mameluke tyranny, to respect the Moslem faith: "Have we not destroyed the Pope, who bade men wage war on Moslems? Have we not destroyed the Knights of Malta, because those fools believed it to be God's will to war against Moslems?" The French soldiers were vastly amused by the humour of these proceedings, and the liberated people fully appreciated the menaces with which Bonaparte's proclamation closed, backed up as these were by irresistible force.[1]

After arranging affairs at Alexandria, where the gallant

[1] The Arab accounts of these events, drawn up by Nakoula and Abdurrahman, are of much interest. They have been well used by M. Dufourcq, editor of Desvernois' "Memoirs," for many suggestive footnotes.

Kléber was left in command, Bonaparte ordered an advance into the interior. Never, perhaps, did he show the value of swift offensive action more decisively than in this prompt march on Damanhour across the desert. The other route by way of Rosetta would have been easier; but, as it was longer, he rejected it, and told off General Menou to capture that city and support a flotilla of boats which was to ascend the Nile and meet the army on its march to Cairo. On July 4th the first division of the main force set forth by night into the desert south of Alexandria. All was new and terrible; and, when the rays of the sun smote on their weary backs, the murmurings of the troops grew loud. This, then, was the land "more fertile than Lombardy," which was the goal of their wanderings. "See, there are the six acres of land which you are promised," exclaimed a waggish soldier to his comrade as they first gazed from ship-board on the desert east of Alexandria; and all the sense of discipline failed to keep this and other gibes from the ears of staff officers even before they reached that city. Far worse was their position now in the shifting sand of the desert, beset by hovering Bedouins, stung by scorpions, and afflicted by intolerable thirst. The Arabs had filled the scanty wells with stones, and only after long toil could the sappers reach the precious fluid beneath. Then the troops rushed and fought for the privilege of drinking a few drops of muddy liquor. Thus they struggled on, the succeeding divisions faring worst of all. Berthier, chief of the staff, relates that a glass of water sold for its weight in gold. Even brave officers abandoned themselves to transports of rage and despair which left them completely prostrate.[1]

But Bonaparte flinched not. His stern composure offered the best rebuke to such childish sallies; and when out of a murmuring group there came the bold remark, "Well, General, are you going to take us to India thus," he abashed the speaker and his comrades by the quick

[1] Desgenettes, "Histoire médicale de l'Armée d'Orient" (Paris, 1802); Belliard, "Mémoires," vol. i.

retort, "No, I would not undertake that with such soldiers as you." French honour, touched to the quick, reasserted itself even above the torments of thirst; and the troops themselves, when they tardily reached the Nile and slaked their thirst in its waters, recognized the pre-eminence of his will and his profound confidence in their endurance. French gaiety had not been wholly eclipsed even by the miseries of the desert march. To cheer their drooping spirits the commander had sent some of the staunchest generals along the line of march. Among them was the gifted Caffarelli, who had lost a leg in the Rhenish campaign: his reassuring words called forth the inimitable retort from the ranks: "Ah! he don't care, not he: he has one leg in France." Scarcely less witty was the soldier's description of the prowling Bedouins, who cut off stragglers and plunderers, as "The mounted highway police."

After brushing aside a charge of 800 Mamelukes at Chebreiss, the army made its way up the banks of the Nile to Embabeh, opposite Cairo. There the Mamelukes, led by the fighting Bey, Murad, had their fortified camp; and there that superb cavalry prepared to overwhelm the invaders in a whirlwind rush of horse (July 21st, 1798). The occasion and the surroundings were such as to inspire both sides with deperate resolution. It was the first fierce shock on land of eastern chivalry and western enterprise since the days of St. Louis; and the ardour of the republicans was scarcely less than that which had kindled the soldiers of the cross. Beside the two armies rolled the mysterious Nile; beyond glittered the slender minarets of Cairo; and on the south there loomed the massy Pyramids. To the forty centuries that had rolled over them, Bonaparte now appealed, in one of those imaginative touches which ever brace the French nature to the utmost tension of daring and endurance. Thus they advanced in close formation towards the intrenched camp of the Mamelukes. The divisions on the left at once rushed at its earthworks, silenced its feeble artillery, and slaughtered the fellahin inside.

But the other divisions, now ranged in squares, while gazing at this exploit, were assailed by the Mamelukes. From out the haze of the mirage, or from behind the ridges of sand and the scrub of the water-melon plants that dotted the plain, some 10,000 of these superb horsemen suddenly appeared and rushed at the squares commanded by Desaix and Reynier. Their richly caparisoned chargers, their waving plumes, their wild battle-cries, and their marvellous skill with carbine and sword, lent picturesqueness and terror to the charge. Musketry and grapeshot mowed down their front coursers in ghastly swathes; but the living mass swept on, well-nigh overwhelming the fronts of the squares, and then, swerving aside, poured through the deadly funnel between. Decimated here also by the steady fire of the French files, and by the discharges of the rear face, they fell away exhausted, leaving heaps of dead and dying on the fronts of the squares, and in their very midst a score of their choicest cavaliers, whose bravery and horsemanship had carried them to certain death amidst the bayonets. The French now assumed the offensive, and Desaix's division, threatening to cut off the retreat of Murad's horsemen, led that wary chief to draw off his shattered squadrons; others sought, though with terrible losses, to escape across the Nile to Ibrahim's following. That chief had taken no share in the fight, and now made off towards Syria. Such was the battle of the Pyramids, which gained a colony at the cost of some thirty killed and about ten times as many wounded: of the killed about twenty fell victims to the cross fire of the two squares.[1]

After halting for a fortnight at Cairo to recruit his weary troops and to arrange the affairs of his conquest, Bonaparte marched eastwards in pursut of Ibrahim and drove him into Syria, while Desaix waged an arduous but successful campaign against Murad in Upper Egypt. But the victors were soon to learn the uselessness of

[1] I have followed chiefly the account of Savary, Duc de Rovigo, "Mems.," ch. iv. See too Desvernois, "Mems.," ch. iv.

merely military triumphs in Egypt. As Bonaparte returned to complete the organization of the new colony, he heard that Nelson had destroyed his fleet.

On July 3rd, before setting out from Alexandria, the French commander gave an order to his admiral, though it must be added that its authenticity is doubtful:

"The admiral will to-morrow acquaint the commander-in-chief by a report whether the squadron can enter the port of Alexandria, or whether, in Aboukir Roads, bringing its broadside to bear, it can defend itself against the enemy's superior force; and in case both these plans should be impracticable, he must sail for Corfu . . . leaving the light ships and the flotilla at Alexandria."

Brueys speedily discovered that the first plan was beset by grave dangers: the entrance to the harbour of Alexandria, when sounded, proved to be most difficult for large ships—such was his judgment and that of Villeneuve and Casabianca—and the exit could be blocked by a single English battleship. As regards the alternatives of Aboukir or Corfu, Brueys went on to state: "My firm desire is to be useful to you in every possible way: and, as I have already said, every post will suit me well, provided that you placed me there in an active way." By this rather ambiguous phrase it would seem that he scouted the alternative of Corfu as consigning him to a degrading inactivity; while at Aboukir he held that he could be actively useful in protecting the rear of the army. In that bay he therefore anchored his largest ships, trusting that the dangers of the approach would screen him from any sudden attack, but making also special preparations in case he should be compelled to fight at anchor.[1] His decision was probably less sound than that of Bonaparte, who, while

[1] See his orders published in the "Correspondance officielle et confid. de Nap. Bonaparte, Egypte," vol. i. (Paris, 1819, p. 270). They rebut Captain Mahan's statement ("Influence of Sea Power upon the Fr. Rev. and Emp.," vol. i., p. 263) as to Brueys' "delusion and lethargy" at Aboukir. On the contrary, though enfeebled by dysentery and worried by lack of provisions and the insubordination

THE BATTLE OF THE NILE, AUGUST 1ST, 1798.

From an engraving of the year 1800, after a drawing in the possession of King George III.

marching to Cairo, and again during his sojourn there, ordered him to make for Corfu or Toulon; for the general saw clearly that the French fleet, riding in safety in those well-protected roadsteads, would really dominate the Mediterranean better than in the open expanse of Aboukir. But these orders did not reach the admiral before the blow fell; and it is, after all, somewhat ungenerous to censure Brueys for his decision to remain at Aboukir and risk a fight rather than comply with the dictates of a prudent but inglorious strategy.

The British admiral, after sweeping the eastern Mediterranean, at last found the French fleet in Aboukir Bay, about ten miles from the Rosetta mouth of the Nile. It was anchored under the lee of a shoal which would have prevented any ordinary admiral from attacking, especially at sundown. But Nelson, knowing that the head ship of the French was free to swing at anchor, rightly concluded that there must be room for British ships to sail between Brueys' stationary line and the shallows. The British captains thrust five ships between the French and the shoal, while the others, passing down the enemy's line on the seaward side, crushed it in detail; and, after a night of carnage, the light of August 2nd dawned on a scene of destruction unsurpassed in naval warfare. Two French ships of the line and two frigates alone escaped: one, the gigantic "Orient," had blown up with the spoils of Malta on board: the rest, eleven in number, were captured or burnt.

To Bonaparte this disaster came as a bolt from the blue. Only two days before, he had written from Cairo to Brueys that all the conduct of the English made him believe them to be inferior in numbers and fully satisfied with blockading Malta. Yet, in order to restore the *morale* of his army, utterly depressed by this disaster,

of his marines, he certainly did what he could under the circumstances. See his letters in the Appendix of Jurien de la Gravière, "Guerres Maritimes," vol. i.

he affected a confidence which he could no longer feel, and said: "Well! here we must remain or achieve a grandeur like that of the ancients."[1] He had recently assured his intimates that after routing the Beys' forces he would return to France and strike a blow direct at England. Whatever he may have designed, he was now a prisoner in his conquest. His men, even some of his highest officers, as Berthier, Bessières, Lannes, Murat, Dumas, and others, bitterly complained of their miserable position. But the commander, whose spirits rose with adversity, took effective means for repressing such discontent. To the last-named, a powerful mulatto, he exclaimed: "You have held seditious parleys: take care that I do not perform my duty: your six feet of stature shall not save you from being shot": and he offered passports for France to a few of the most discontented and useless officers, well knowing that after Nelson's victory they could scarcely be used. Others, again, out-Heroding Herod, suggested that the frigates and transports at Alexandria should be taken to pieces and conveyed on camels' backs to Suez, there to be used for the invasion of India.[2]

The versatility of Bonaparte's genius was never more marked than at this time of discouragement. While his enemies figured him and his exhausted troops as vainly seeking to escape from those arid wastes; while Nelson was landing the French prisoners in order to increase his embarrassment about food, Bonaparte and his *savants* were developing constructive powers of the highest order, which made the army independent of Europe. It was a vast undertaking. Deprived of most of their treasure and many of their mechanical appliances by the loss of the fleet, the *savants* and engineers had, as it were, to start from the beginning. Some strove to meet the difficulties of food-supply by extending the cultivation of corn and rice, or by the construction of large ovens and bakeries, or of windmills for grinding

[1] Desvernois, "Mems.," ch. v.

[2] *Ib.*, ch. vi.

corn. Others planted vineyards for the future, or sought to appease the ceaseless thirst of the soldiery by the manufacture of a kind of native beer. Foundries and workshops began, though slowly, to supply tools and machines; the earth was rifled of her treasures, natron was wrought, saltpetre works were established, and gunpowder was thereby procured for the army with an energy which recalled the prodigies of activity of 1793.

With his usual ardour in the cause of learning, Bonaparte several times a week appeared in the chemical laboratory, or witnessed the experiments performed by Berthollet and Monge. Desirous of giving cohesion to the efforts of his *savants*, and of honouring not only the useful arts but abstruse research, he united these pioneers of science in a society termed the Institute of Egypt. On August 23rd, 1798, it was installed with much ceremony in the palace of one of the Beys, Monge being president and Bonaparte vice-president. The general also enrolled himself in the mathematical section of the institute. Indeed, he sought by all possible means to aid the labours of the *savants*, whose dissertations were now heard in the large hall of the harem that formerly resounded only to the twanging of lutes, weary jests, and idle laughter. The labours of the *savants* were not confined to Cairo and the Delta. As soon as the victories of Desaix in Upper Egypt opened the middle reaches of the Nile to peaceful research, the treasures of Memphis were revealed to the astonished gaze of western learning. Many of the more portable relics were transferred to Cairo, and thence to Rosetta or Alexandria, in order to grace the museums of Paris. The *savants* proposed, but sea-power disposed, of these treasures. They are now, with few exceptions, in the British Museum.

Apart from archæology, much was done to extend the bounds of learning. Astronomy gained much by the observations of General Caffarelli. A series of measurements was begun for an exact survey of Egypt: the geologists and engineers examined the course of

the Nile, recorded the progress of alluvial deposits at its mouth or on its banks, and therefrom calculated the antiquity of divers parts of the Delta. No part of the great conqueror's career so aptly illustrates the truth of his noble words to the magistrates of the Ligurian Republic: "The true conquests, the only conquests which cost no regrets, are those achieved over ignorance."

Such, in brief outline, is the story of the renascence in Egypt. The mother-land of science and learning, after a wellnigh barren interval of 1,100 years since the Arab conquest, was now developed and illumined by the application of the arts with which in the dim past she had enriched the life of barbarous Europe. The repayment of this incalculable debt was due primarily to the enterprise of Bonaparte. It is one of his many titles to fame and to the homage of posterity. How poor by the side of this encyclopædic genius are the gifts even of his most brilliant foes! At that same time the Archduke Charles of Austria was vegetating in inglorious ease on his estates. As for Beaulieu and Würmser, they had subsided into their native obscurity. Nelson, after his recent triumph, persuading himself that "Bonaparte had gone to the devil," was bending before the whims of a professional beauty and the odious despotism of the worst Court in Europe. While the admiral tarnished his fame on the Syren coast of Naples, his great opponent bent all the resources of a fertile intellect to retrieve his position, and even under the gloom of disaster threw a gleam of light into the dark continent. While his adversaries were merely generals or admirals, hampered by a stupid education and a narrow nationality, Bonaparte had eagerly imbibed the new learning of his age and saw its possible influence on the reorganization of society. He is not merely a general. Even when he is scattering to the winds the proud chivalry of the East, and is prescribing to Brueys his safest course of action, he finds time vastly to expand the horizon of human knowledge.

Nor did he neglect Egyptian politics. He used a native council for consultation and for the promulgation of his own ideas. Immediately after his entry into Cairo he appointed nine sheikhs to form a divan, or council, consulting daily on public order and the food-supplies of the city. He next assembled a general divan for Egypt, and a smaller council for each province, and asked their advice concerning the administration of justice and the collection of taxes.[1] In its use of oriental terminology, this scheme was undeniably clever; but neither French, Arabs, nor Turks were deceived as to the real government, which resided entirely in Bonaparte; and his skill in reapportioning the imposts had some effect on the prosperity of the land, enabling it to bear the drain of his constant requisitions. The welfare of the new colony was also promoted by the foundation of a mint and of an Egyptian Commercial Company.

His inventive genius was by no means exhausted by these varied toils. On his journey to Suez he met a camel caravan in the desert, and noticing the speed of the animals, he determined to form a camel corps; and in the first month of 1799 the experiment was made with such success that admission into the ranks of the camelry came to be viewed as a favour. Each animal carried two men with their arms and baggage: the uniform was sky-blue with a white turban; and the speed and precision of their movements enabled them to deal terrible blows, even at distant tribes of Bedouins, who bent before a genius that could outwit them even in their own deserts.

The pleasures of his officers and men were also met by the opening of the Tivoli Gardens; and there, in sight of the Pyramids, the life of the Palais Royal took root: the glasses clinked, the dice rattled, and heads reeled to the lascivious movements of the eastern dance; and Bonaparte himself indulged a passing passion for

[1] Order of July 27th, 1798.

the wife of one of his officers, with an openness that brought on him a rebuke from his stepson, Eugène Beauharnais. But already he had been rendered desperate by reports of the unfaithfulness of Josephine at Paris; the news wrung from him this pathetic letter to his brother Joseph—the death-cry of his long drooping idealism:

"I have much to worry me privately, for the veil is entirely torn aside. You alone remain to me; your affection is very dear to me: nothing more remains to make me a misanthrope than to lose her and see you betray me. . . . Buy a country seat against my return, either near Paris or in Burgundy. I need solitude and isolation: grandeur wearies me: the fount of feeling is dried up: glory itself is insipid. At twenty-nine years of age I have exhausted everything. It only remains to me to become a thorough egoist."[1]

Many rumours were circulated as to Bonaparte's public appearance in oriental costume and his presence at a religious service in a mosque. It is even stated by Thiers that at one of the chief festivals he repaired to the great mosque, repeated the prayers like a true Moslem, crossing his legs and swaying his body to and fro, so that he "edified the believers by his orthodox piety." But the whole incident, however attractive scenically and in point of humour, seems to be no better authenticated than the religious results about which the historian cherished so hopeful a belief. The truth seems to be that the general went to the celebration of the birth of the Prophet as an interested spectator, at the house of the sheik, El Bekri. Some hundred sheikhs were there present: they swayed their bodies to and fro while the story of Mahomet's life was recited; and Bonaparte afterwards partook of an oriental repast. But he never forgot his dignity so far as publicly to appear in a turban and loose trousers, which he donned only once for the amusement of his staff.[2] That he en-

[1] Ducasse, "Les Rois, Frères de Napoléon," p. 8.

[2] "Mémoires de Napoléon," vol. ii.; Bourrienne, "Mems.," vol. i., ch. xvii.

deavoured to pose as a Moslem is beyond doubt. Witness his endeavour to convince the imams at Cairo of his desire to conform to their faith. If we may believe that dubious compilation, "A Voice from St. Helena," he bade them consult together as to the possibility of admission of men, who were not circumcised and did not abstain from wine, into the true fold. As to the latter disability, he stated that the French were poor cold people, inhabitants of the north, who could not exist without wine. For a long time the imams demurred to this plea, which involved greater difficulties than the question of circumcision: but after long consultations they decided that both objections might be waived in consideration of a superabundance of good works. The reply was prompted by an irony no less subtle than that which accompanied the claim, and neither side was deceived in this contest of wits.

A rude awakening soon came. For some few days there had been rumours that the division under Desaix which was fighting the Mamelukes in Upper Egypt had been engulfed in those sandy wastes; and this report fanned to a flame the latent hostility against the unbelievers. From many minarets of Cairo a summons to arms took the place of the customary call to prayer: and on October 21st the French garrison was so fiercely and suddenly attacked as to leave the issue doubtful. Discipline and grapeshot finally prevailed, whereupon a repression of oriental ferocity cowed the spirits of the townsfolk and of the neighbouring country. Forts were constructed in Cairo and at all the strategic points along the lower Nile, and Egypt seemed to be conquered.

Feeling sure now of his hold on the populace, Bonaparte, at the close of the year, undertook a journey to Suez and the Sinaitic peninsula. It offered that combination of utility and romance which ever appealed to him. At Suez he sought to revivify commerce by lightening the customs' dues, by founding a branch of his Egyptian commercial company, and by graciously re-

ceiving a deputation of the Arabs of Tor who came to sue for his friendship.[1] Then, journeying on, he visited the fountains of Moses; but it is not true that (as stated by Lanfrey) he proceeded to Mount Sinai and signed his name in the register of the monastery side by side with that of Mahomet. On his return to the isthmus he is said to have narrowly escaped from the rising tide of the Red Sea. If we may credit Savary, who was not of the party, its safety was due to the address of the commander, who, as darkness fell on the bewildered band, arranged his horsemen in files, until the higher causeway of the path was again discovered. North of Suez the traces of the canal dug by Sesostris revealed themselves to the trained eye of the commander. The observations of his engineers confirmed his conjecture, but the vast labour of reconstruction forbade any attempt to construct a maritime canal. On his return to Cairo he wrote to the Imam of Muscat, assuring him of his friendship and begging him to forward to Tippoo Sahib a letter offering alliance and deliverance from "the iron yoke of England," and stating that the French had arrived on the shores of the Red Sea "with a numerous and invincible army." The letter was intercepted by a British cruiser; and the alarm caused by these vast designs only served to spur on our forces to efforts which cost Tippoo his life and the French most of their Indian settlements.

[1] "Méms. de Berthier."

CHAPTER IX

SYRIA

MEANWHILE Turkey had declared war on France, and was sending an army through Syria for the recovery of Egypt, while another expedition was assembling at Rhodes. Like all great captains, Bonaparte was never content with the defensive: his convictions and his pugnacious instincts alike urged him to give rather than to receive the blow; and he argued that he could attack and destroy the Syrian force before the cessation of the winter's gales would allow the other Turkish expedition to attempt a disembarkation at Aboukir. If he waited in Egypt, he might have to meet the two attacks at once, whereas, if he struck at Jaffa and Acre, he would rid himself of the chief mass of his foes. Besides, as he explained in his letter of February 10th, 1799, to the Directors, his seizure of those towns would rob the English fleet of its base of supplies and thereby cripple its activities off the coast of Egypt. So far, his reasons for the Syrian campaign are intelligible and sound. But he also gave out that, leaving Desaix and his Ethiopian supernumeraries to defend Egypt, he himself would accomplish the conquest of Syria and the East: he would raise in revolt the Christians of the Lebanon and Armenia, overthrow the Turkish power in Asia, and then march either on Constantinople or Delhi.

It is difficult to take this quite seriously, considering that he had only 12,000 men available for these adventures; and with anyone but Bonaparte they might be dismissed as utterly Quixotic. But in his case we must seek for some practical purpose; for he never divorced

fancy from fact, and in his best days imagination was the hand-maid of politics and strategy rather than the mistress. Probably these gorgeous visions were bodied forth so as to inspirit the soldiery and enthrall the imagination of France. He had already proved the immense power of imagination over that susceptible people. In one sense, his whole expedition was but a picturesque drama; and an imposing climax could now be found in the plan of an Eastern Empire, that opened up dazzling vistas of glory and veiled his figure in a grandiose mirage, beside which the civilian Directors were dwarfed into ridiculous puppets.

If these vast schemes are to be taken seriously, another explanation of them is possible, namely, that he relied on the example set by Alexander the Great, who with a small but highly-trained army had shattered the stately dominions of the East. If Bonaparte trusted to this precedent, he erred. True, Alexander began his enterprise with a comparatively small force: but at least he had a sure base of operations, and his army in Thessaly was strong enough to prevent Athens from exchanging her sullen but passive hostility for an offensive that would endanger his communications by sea. The Athenian fleet was therefore never the danger to the Macedonians that Nelson and Sir Sidney Smith were to Bonaparte. Since the French armada weighed anchor at Toulon, Britain's position had became vastly stronger. Nelson was lord of the Mediterranean: the revolt in Ireland had completely failed: a coalition against France was being formed; and it was therefore certain that the force in Egypt could not be materially strengthened. Bonaparte did not as yet know the full extent of his country's danger; but the mere fact that he would have to bear the pressure of England's naval supremacy along the Syrian coast should have dispelled any notion that he could rival the exploits of Alexander and become Emperor of the East.[1]

[1] On November 4th, 1798, the French Government forwarded to Bonaparte, in triplicate copies, a despatch which, after setting forth

From conjectures about motives we turn to facts. Setting forth early in February, the French captured most of the Turkish advanced guard at the fort of El Arisch, but sent their captives away on condition of not bearing arms against France for at least one year. The victors then marched on Jaffa, and, in spite of a spirited defence, took it by storm (March 7th). Flushed with their triumph over a cruel and detested foe, the soldiers were giving up the city to pillage and massacre, when two aides-de-camp promised quarter to a large body of the defenders, who had sought refuge in a large caravanserai; and their lives were grudgingly spared by the victors. Bonaparte vehemently reproached his aides-de-camp for their ill-timed clemency. What could he now do with these 2,500 or 3,000 prisoners? They could not be trusted to serve with the French; besides, the provisions scarcely sufficed for Bonaparte's own men, who began to complain loudly at sharing any with Turks and Albanians. They could not be sent away to Egypt, there to spread discontent: and only 300 Egyptians were so sent away.[1] Finally, on the demand of his generals and troops, the remaining prisoners were shot down on the seashore. There is, however, no warrant for the malicious assertion that Bonaparte readily gave the fatal order. On the contrary, he delayed it for

the failure of their designs on Ireland, urged him either (1) to remain in Egypt, of which they evidently disapproved, or (2) to march towards India and co-operate with Tippoo Sahib, or (3) to advance on Constantinople in order that France might have a share in the partition of Turkey, which was then being discussed between the Courts of Petersburg and Vienna. No copy of this despatch seems to have reached Bonaparte before he set out for Syria (February 10th). This curious and perhaps guileful despatch is given in full by Boulay de la Meurthe, "Le Directoire et l'Expédition d'Egypte," Appendix, No. 5.

On the whole, I am compelled to dissent from Captain Mahan ("Influence of Sea Power," vol. i., pp. 324-326), and to regard the larger schemes of Bonaparte in this Syrian enterprise as visionary.

[1] Berthier, "Mémoires"; Belliard, "Bourrienne et ses Erreurs," also corrects Bourrienne. As to the dearth of food, denied by Lanfrey, see Captain Krettly, "Souvenirs historiques."

three days, until the growing difficulties and the loud complaints of his soldiers wrung it from him as a last resort.

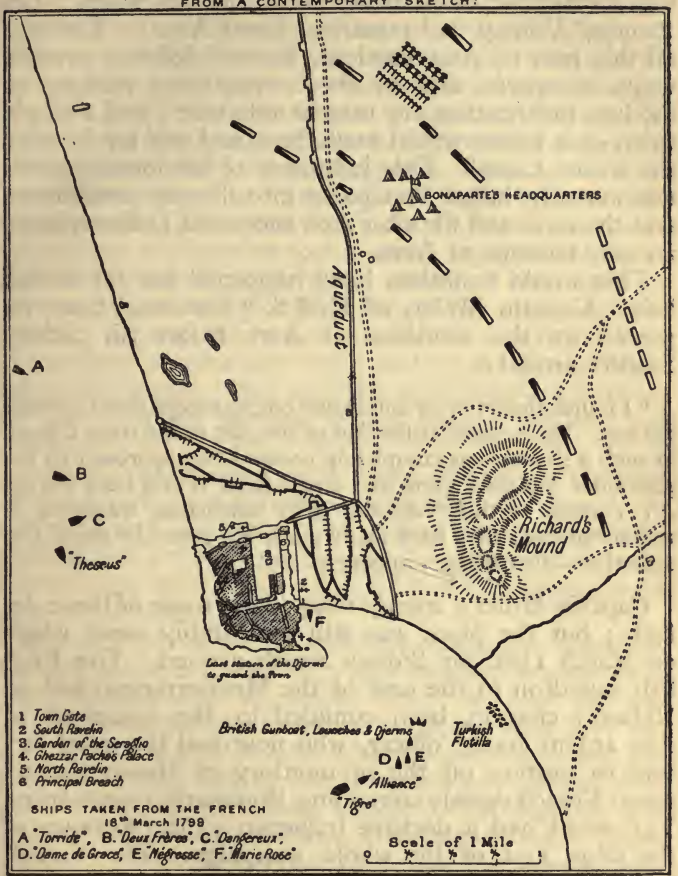
Moreover, several of the victims had already fought against him at El Arisch, and had violated their promise that they would fight no more against the French in that campaign. M. Lanfrey's assertion that there is no evidence for the identification is untenable, in view of a document which I have discovered in the Records of the British Admiralty. Inclosed with Sir Sidney Smith's despatches is one from the secretary of Gezzar, dated Acre, March 1st, 1799, in which the Pacha urgently entreats the British commodore to come to his help, because his (Gezzar's) troops had failed to hold El Arisch, and the *same troops* had also abandoned Gaza and were in great dread of the French at Jaffa. Considered from the military point of view, the massacre at Jaffa is perhaps defensible; and Bonaparte's reluctant assent contrasts favourably with the conduct of many commanders in similar cases. Perhaps an episode like that at Jaffa is not without its uses in opening the eyes of mankind to the ghastly shifts by which military glory may have to be won. The alternative to the massacre was the detaching of a French battalion to conduct their prisoners to Egypt. As that would seriously have weakened the little army, the prisoners were shot.

A deadlier foe was now to be faced. Already at El Arisch a few cases of the plague had appeared in Kléber's division, which had come from Rosetta and Damietta; and the relics of the retreating Mameluke and Turkish forces seem also to have bequeathed that disease as a fatal legacy to their pursuers. After Jaffa the malady attacked most battalions of the army; and it may have quickened Bonaparte's march towards Acre. Certain it is that he rejected Kléber's advice to advance inland towards Nablûs, the ancient Shechem, and from that commanding centre to dominate Palestine and defy the power of Gezzar.[1] Always prompt to strike at the

[1] Ernouf, "Le General Kléber," p. 201.

heart, the commander-in-chief determined to march straight on Acre, where that notorious Turkish pacha

PLAN OF THE SIEGE OF ACRE
FROM A CONTEMPORARY SKETCH



sat intrenched behind weak walls and the ramparts of terror which his calculating ferocity had reared around him. Ever since the age of the Crusades that seaport

had been the chief place of arms of Palestine; but the harbour was now nearly silted up, and even the neighbouring roadstead of Hayfa was desolate. The fortress was formidable only to orientals. In his work, "Les Ruines," Volney had remarked about Acre: "Through all this part of Asia bastions, lines of defence, covered ways, ramparts, and in short everything relating to modern fortification are utterly unknown; and a single thirty-gun frigate would easily bombard and lay in ruins the whole coast." This judgment of his former friend undoubtedly lulled Bonaparte into illusory confidence, and the rank and file after their success at Jaffa expected an easy triumph at Acre.

This would doubtless have happened but for British help. Captain Miller, of H.M.S. "Theseus," thus reported on the condition of Acre before Sir Sidney Smith's arrival:

"I found almost every embrasure empty except those towards the sea. Many years' collection of the dirt of the town thrown in such a situation as completely covered the approach to the gate from the only guns that could flank it and from the sea . . . none of their batteries have casemates, traverses, or splinter-proofs: they have many guns, but generally small and defective—the carriages in general so." [1]

Captain Miller's energy made good some of these defects; but the place was still lamentably weak when, on March 15th, Sir Sidney Smith arrived. The English squadron in the east of the Mediterranean had, to Nelson's chagrin, been confided to the command of this ardent young officer, who now had the good fortune to capture off the promontory of Mount Carmel seven French vessels containing Bonaparte's siege-train. This event had a decisive influence on the fortunes of the siege and of the whole campaign. The French cannon were now hastily mounted on the very walls that they had been intended to breach; while the gun vessels reinforced the two English frigates, and were

[1] "Admiralty Records," Mediterranean, No. 19.

ready to pour a searching fire on the assailants in their trenches or as they rushed against the walls. These had also been hastily strengthened under the direction of a French royalist officer named Phélippeaux, an old schoolfellow of Bonaparte, and later on a comrade of Sidney Smith, alike in his imprisonment and in his escape from the clutches of the revolutionists. Sharing the lot of the adventurous young seaman, Phélippeaux sailed to the Levant, and now brought to the defence of Acre the science of a skilled engineer. Bravely seconded by British officers and seamen, he sought to repair the breach effected by the French field-pieces, and constructed at the most exposed points inner defences, before which the most obstinate efforts of the storming parties melted away. Nine times did the assailants advance against the breaches with the confidence born of unfailing success and redoubled by the gaze of their great commander; but as often were they beaten back by the obstinate bravery of the British seamen and Turks.

The monotony was once relieved by a quaint incident. In the course of a correspondence with Bonaparte, Sir Sidney Smith is said to have shown his annoyance by sending him a challenge to a duel. It met with the very proper reply that he would fight, if the English would send out *a Marlborough.*

During these desperate conflicts Bonaparte detached a considerable number of troops inland to beat off a large Turkish and Mameluke force destined for the relief of Acre and the invasion of Egypt. The first encounter was near Nazareth, where Junot displayed the dash and resource which had brought him fame in Italy; but the decisive battle was fought in the Plain of Esdraëlon, not far from the base of Mount Tabor. There Kléber's division of 2,000 men was for some hours hard pressed by a motley array of horse and foot drawn from diverse parts of the Sultan's dominions. The heroism of the burly Alsacian and the toughness of his men barely kept off the fierce rushes of the Moslem

horse and foot. At last Bonaparte's cannon were heard. The chief, marching swiftly on with his troops drawn up in three squares, speedily brushed aside the enveloping clouds of orientals; finally, by well-combined efforts the French hurled back the enemy on passes, some of which had been seized by the commander's prescience. At the close of this memorable day (April 15th) an army of nearly 30,000 men was completely routed and dispersed by the valour and skilful dispositions of two divisions which together amounted to less than a seventh of that number. No battle of modern times more closely resembles the exploits of Alexander than this masterly concentration of force; and possibly some memory of this may have prompted the words of Kléber—"General, how great you are!"—as he met and embraced his commander on the field of battle. Bonaparte and his staff spent the night at the Convent of Nazareth; and when his officers burst out laughing at the story told by the Prior of the breaking of a pillar by the angel Gabriel at the time of the Annunciation, their untimely levity was promptly checked by the frown of the commander.

The triumph seemed to decide the Christians of the Lebanon to ally themselves with Bonaparte, and they secretly covenanted to furnish 12,000 troops at his cost; but this question ultimately depended on the siege of Acre. On rejoining their comrades before Acre, the victors found that the siege had made little progress: for a time the besiegers relied on mining operations, but with little success; though Phélippeaux succumbed to a sunstroke (May 1st), his place was filled by Colonel Douglas, who foiled the efforts of the French engineers and enabled the place to hold out till the advent of the long-expected Turkish succours. On May 7th their sails were visible far out on an almost windless sea. At once Bonaparte made desperate efforts to carry the "mud-hole" by storm. Led with reckless gallantry by the heroic Lannes, his troops gained part of the wall and planted the tricolour on the north-east tower; but all further progress was checked by English blue-jackets,

whom the commodore poured into the town; and the Turkish reinforcements, wafted landwards by a favouring breeze, were landed in time to wrest the ramparts from the assailants' grip. On the following day an assault was again attempted: from the English ships Bonaparte could be clearly seen on Richard Cœur de Lion's mound urging on the French; but though, under Lannes' leadership, they penetrated to the garden of Gezzar's seraglio, they fell in heaps under the bullets, pikes, and scimitars of the defenders, and few returned alive to the camp. Lannes himself was dangerously wounded, and saved only by the devotion of an officer.

Both sides were now worn out by this extraordinary siege. "This town is not, nor ever has been, defensible according to the rules of art; but according to every other rule it must and shall be defended"—so wrote Sir Sidney Smith to Nelson on May 9th. But a fell influence was working against the besiegers; as the season advanced, they succumbed more and more to the ravages of the plague; and, after failing again on May 10th, many of their battalions refused to advance to the breach over the putrid remains of their comrades. Finally, Bonaparte, after clinging to his enterprise with desperate tenacity, on the night of May 20th gave orders to retreat.

This siege of nine weeks' duration had cost him severe losses, among them being Generals Caffarelli and Bon: but worst of all was the loss of that reputation for invincibility which he had hitherto enjoyed. His defeat at Caldiero, near Verona, in 1796 had been officially converted into a victory: but Acre could not be termed anything but a reverse. In vain did the commander and his staff proclaim that, after dispersing the Turks at Mount Tabor, the capture of Acre was superfluous; his desperate efforts in the early part of May revealed the hollowness of his words. There were, it is true, solid reasons for his retreat. He had just heard of the breaking out of the war of the Second Coalition against France; and revolts in Egypt also demanded his

presence.[1] But these last events furnished a damning commentary on his whole Syrian enterprise, which had led to a dangerous diffusion of the French forces. And for what? For the conquest of Constantinople or of India? That dream seems to have haunted Bonaparte's brain even down to the close of the siege of Acre. During the siege, and later, he was heard to inveigh against "the miserable little hole" which had come between him and his destiny—the Empire of the East; and it is possible that ideas which he may at first have set forth in order to dazzle his comrades came finally to master his whole being. Certainly the words just quoted betoken a quite abnormal wilfulness as well as a peculiarly subjective notion of fatalism. His "destiny" was to be mapped out by his own prescience, decided by his own will, gripped by his own powers. Such fatalism had nothing in common with the sombre creed of the East: it was merely an excess of individualism: it was the matured expression of that feature of his character, curiously dominant even in childhood, that *what he wanted he must of necessity have.* How strange that this imperious obstinacy, this sublimation of western will-power, should not have been tamed even by the overmastering might of Nature in the Orient!

As for the Empire of the East, the declared hostility of the tribes around Nablûs had shown how futile were Bonaparte's efforts to win over Moslems: and his earlier Moslem proclamations were skilfully distributed by Sir Sidney Smith among the Christians of Syria, and served partly to neutralize the efforts which Bonaparte made to win them over.[2] Vain indeed was the effort to conciliate the Moslems in Egypt, and yet in Syria to arouse the Christians against the Commander of the Faithful. Such religious opportunism smacked of the Parisian boulevards: it utterly ignored the tenacity of belief of the East, where the creed is the very life. The outcome of all that *finesse* was seen in the closing days of the

[1] "Corresp.," No. 4124; Lavalette, "Mems.," ch. xxi.
[2] Sidney Smith's "Despatch to Nelson" of May 30th, 1799.

siege and during the retreat towards Jaffa, when the tribes of the Lebanon and of the Nablûs district watched like vultures on the hills and swooped down on the retreating columns. The pain of disillusionment, added to his sympathy with the sick and wounded, once broke down Bonaparte's nerves. Having ordered all horsemen to dismount so that there might be sufficient transport for the sick and maimed, the commander was asked by an equerry which horse he reserved for his own use. "Did you not hear the order," he retorted, striking the man with his whip, "everyone on foot." Rarely did this great man mar a noble action by harsh treatment: the incident sufficiently reveals the tension of feelings, always keen, and now overwrought by physical suffering and mental disappointment.

There was indeed much to exasperate him. At Acre he had lost nearly 5,000 men in killed, wounded, and plague-stricken, though he falsely reported to the Directory that his losses during the whole expedition did not exceed 1,500 men: and during the terrible retreat to Jaffa he was shocked, not only by occasional suicides of soldiers in his presence, but by the utter callousness of officers and men to the claims of the sick and wounded. It was as a rebuke to this inhumanity that he ordered all to march on foot, and his authority seems even to have been exerted to prevent some attempts at poisoning the plague-stricken. The narrative of J. Miot, commissary of the army, shows that these suggestions originated among the soldiery at Acre when threatened with the toil of transporting those unfortunates back to Egypt; and, as his testimony is generally adverse to Bonaparte, and he mentions the same horrible device, when speaking of the hospitals at Jaffa, as a camp rumour, it may be regarded as scarcely worthy of credence.[1]

[1] J. Miot's words are: "Mais s'il en faut croire cette voix publique, trop souvent organe de la vérite tardive, qu'en vain les grands espèrent enchaîner, c'est un fait trop avéré que quelques blessés du Mont Carmel et une grande partie des malades à

Undoubtedly the scenes were heartrending at Jaffa; and it has been generally believed that the victims of the plague were then and there put out of their miseries by large doses of opium. Certainly the hospitals were crowded with wounded and victims of the plague; but during the seven days' halt at that town adequate measures were taken by the chief medical officers, Desgenettes and Larrey, for their transport to Egypt. More than a thousand were sent away on ships, seven of which were fortunately present; and 800 were conveyed to Egypt in carts or litters across the desert.[1] Another fact suffices to refute the slander mentioned above. From the despatch of Sir Sidney Smith to Nelson of May 30th, 1799, it appears that, when the English commodore touched at Jaffa, he found some of the abandoned ones *still alive:* "We have found seven poor fellows in the hospital and will take care of them." He also supplied the French ships conveying the wounded with water, provisions, and stores, of which they were much in need, and allowed them to proceed to their destination. It is true that the evidence of Las Cases at St. Helena, eagerly cited by Lanfrey, seems to show that some of the worst cases in the Jaffa hospitals were got rid of by opium; but the admission by Napoleon that the administering of opium was justifiable occurred in one of those casuistical discussions which turn, not on facts, but on motives. Conclusions drawn from such conversations, sixteen years or more after the supposed occurrence, must in any case give ground before the evidence of contemporaries, which proves that every care was taken of the sick and wounded, that the proposals of poisoning first came from the soldiery, that Napoleon both before and after Jaffa set the noble example of marching on foot so that there might be sufficiency of transport, that nearly all the unfortunates arrived in Egypt and in fair condition,

l'hôpital de Jaffa ont péri par les médicaments qui leur ont été administrés." Can this be called evidence?

[1] Larrey, "Relation historique"; Lavalette, "Mems.," ch. xxi.

and that seven survivors were found alive at Jaffa by English officers.[1]

The remaining episodes of the Eastern Expedition may be briefly dismissed. After a painful desert march the army returned to Egypt in June; and, on July 25th, under the lead of Murat and Lannes, drove into the sea a large force of Turks which had effected a landing in Aboukir Bay. Bonaparte was now weary of gaining triumphs over foes whom he and his soldiers despised. While in this state of mind, he received from Sir Sidney Smith a packet of English and German newspapers giving news up to June 6th, which brought him quickly to a decision. The formation of a powerful coalition, the loss of Italy, defeats on the Rhine, and the schisms, disgust, and despair prevalent in France—all drew his imagination westwards away from the illusory Orient; and he determined to leave his army to the care of Kléber and sail to France.

The morality of this step has been keenly discussed. The rank and file of the army seem to have regarded it as little less than desertion,[2] and the predominance of personal motives in this important decision can scarcely be denied. His private aim in undertaking the Eastern Expedition, that of dazzling the imagination of the French people and of exhibiting the incapacity of the Directory, had been abundantly realized. His eastern enterprise had now shrunk to practical and prosaic dimensions, namely, the consolidation of French power in Egypt. Yet, as will appear in later chapters, he did not give up his oriental schemes; though at St. Helena he once oddly spoke of the Egyptian expedition as an "exhausted enterprise," it is clear that he worked hard

[1] See Belliard, "Bourrienne et ses Erreurs"; also a letter of d'Aure, formerly Intendant General of this army, to the "Journal des Débats" of April 16th, 1829, in reply to Bourrienne.

[2] "On disait tout haut qu'il se sauvait lâchement," Merme in Guitry's "L'Armée en Egypte." But Bonaparte had prepared for this discouragement and worse eventualities by warning Kléber in the letter of August 22nd, 1799, that if he lost 1,500 men by the plague he was free to treat for the evacuation of Egypt.

to keep his colony. The career of Alexander had for him a charm that even the conquests of Cæsar could not rival; and at the height of his European triumphs, the hero of Austerlitz was heard to murmur: "J'ai manqué à ma fortune à Saint-Jean d'Acre."[1]

In defence of his sudden return it may be urged that he had more than once promised the Directory that his stay in Egypt would not exceed five months; and there can be no doubt that now, as always, he had an alternative plan before him in case of failure or incomplete success in the East. To this alternative he now turned with that swiftness and fertility of resource which astonished both friends and foes in countless battles and at many political crises.

It has been stated by Lanfrey that his appointment of Kléber to succeed him was dictated by political and personal hostility; but it may more naturally be considered a tribute to his abilities as a general and to his influence over the soldiery, which was only second to that of Bonaparte and Desaix. He also promised to send him speedy succour; and as there seemed to be a probability of France regaining her naval supremacy in the Mediterranean by the union of the fleet of Bruix with that of Spain, he might well hope to send ample reinforcements. He probably did not know the actual facts of the case, that in July Bruix tamely followed the Spanish squadron to Cadiz, and that the Directory had ordered Bruix to withdraw the French army from Egypt. But, arguing from the facts as known to him, Bonaparte might well believe that the difficulties of France would be fully met by his own return, and that Egypt could be held with ease. The duty of a great commander is to be at the post of greatest danger, and that was now on the banks of the Rhine or Mincio.

The advent of a south-east wind, a rare event there at that season of the year, led him hastily to embark at Alexandria in the night of August 22nd-23rd. His two frigates bore with him some of the greatest sons of France; his chief of the staff, Berthier, whose ardent love for Madame Visconti had been repressed by his

[1] Lucien Bonaparte, "Mémoires," vol. ii., ch. xiv.

reluctant determination to share the fortunes of his chief; Lannes and Murat, both recently wounded, but covered with glory by their exploits in Syria and at Aboukir; his friend Marmont, as well as Duroc, Andréossi, Bessières, Lavalette, Admiral Gantheaume, Monge, and Berthollet, his secretary Bourrienne, and the traveller Denon. He also left orders that Desaix, who had been in charge of Upper Egypt, should soon return to France, so that the rivalry between him and Kléber might not distract French councils in Egypt. There seems little ground for the assertion that he selected for return his favourites and men likely to be politically serviceable to him. If he left behind the ardently republican Kléber, he also left his old friend Junot: if he brought back Berthier and Marmont, he also ordered the return of the almost Jacobinical Desaix. Sir Sidney Smith having gone to Cyprus for repairs, Bonaparte slipped out unmolested. By great good fortune his frigates eluded the English ships cruising between Malta and Cape Bon, and after a brief stay at Ajaccio, he and his comrades landed at Fréjus (October 9th). So great was the enthusiasm of the people that, despite all the quarantine regulations, they escorted the party to shore. "We prefer the plague to the Austrians," they exclaimed; and this feeling but feebly expressed the emotion of France at the return of the Conqueror of the East.

And yet he found no domestic happiness. Josephine's *liaison* with a young officer, M. Charles, had become notorious owing to his prolonged visits to her country house, La Malmaison. Alarmed at her husband's return, she now hurried to meet him, but missed him on the way; while he, finding his home at Paris empty, raged at her infidelity, refused to see her on her return, and declared he would divorce her. From this he was turned by the prayers of Eugène and Hortense Beauharnais, and the tears of Josephine herself. A reconciliation took place; but there was no reunion of hearts, and Mme. Reinhard echoed the feeling of respectable society when she wrote that he should have divorced her outright. Thenceforth he lived for Glory alone.

CHAPTER X

BRUMAIRE

RARELY has France been in a more distracted state than in the summer of 1799. Royalist revolts in the west and south rent the national life. The religious schism was unhealed; education was at a standstill; commerce had been swept from the seas by the British fleets; and trade with Italy and Germany was cut off by the war of the Second Coalition.

The formation of this league between Russia, Austria, England, Naples, Portugal, and Turkey was in the main the outcome of the alarm and indignation aroused by the reckless conduct of the Directory, which overthrew the Bourbons at Naples, erected the Parthenopæan Republic, and compelled the King of Sardinia to abdicate at Turin and retire to his island. Russia and Austria took a leading part in forming the Coalition. Great Britain, ever hampered by her inept army organization, offered to supply money in place of the troops which she could not properly equip.

But under the cloak of legitimacy the monarchical Powers harboured their own selfish designs. This Nessus' cloak of the First Coalition soon galled the limbs of the allies and rendered them incapable of sustained and vigorous action. Yet they gained signal successes over the raw conscripts of France. In July, 1799, the Austro-Russian army captured Mantua and Alessandria; and in the following month Suvoroff gained the decisive victory of Novi and drove the remains of the French forces towards Genoa. The next months were far more favourable to the tricolour flag, for, owing to Austro-

Russian jealousies, Masséna was able to gain an important victory at Zürich over a Russian army. In the north the republicans were also in the end successful. Ten days after Bonaparte's arrival at Fréjus, they compelled an Anglo-Russian force campaigning in Holland to the capitulation of Alkmaar, whereby the Duke of York agreed to withdraw all his troops from that coast. Disgusted by the conduct of his allies, the Czar Paul withdrew his troops from any active share in the operations by land, thenceforth concentrating his efforts on the acquisition of Corsica, Malta, and posts of vantage in the Adriatic. These designs, which were well known to the British Government, served to hamper our naval strength in those seas, and to fetter the action of the Austrian arms in Northern Italy.[1]

Yet, though the schisms of the allies finally yielded a victory to the French in the campaigns of 1799, the position of the Republic was precarious. The danger was rather internal than external. It arose from embarrassed finances, from the civil war that burst out with new violence in the north-west, and, above all, from a sense of the supreme difficulty of attaining political stability and of reconciling liberty with order. The struggle between the executive and legislative powers, which had been rudely settled by the *coup d'état* of Fructidor, had been postponed, not solved. Public opinion was speedily ruffled by the Jacobinical violence which ensued. The stifling of liberty of the press and the curtailment of the right of public meeting served only to instill new energy into the party of resistance in the elective Councils, and to undermine a republican government that relied on Venetian methods of rule. Reviewing the events of those days, Madame de Staël finely remarked that only the free consent of the people could breathe life into political institutions; and that the monstrous system of guaranteeing freedom by despotic means served only to manufacture governments

[1] In our "Admiralty Records" (Mediterranean, No. 21) are documents which prove the reality of Russian designs on Corsica.

that had to be wound up at intervals lest they should stop dead.[1] Such a sarcasm, coming from the gifted lady who had aided and abetted the stroke of Fructidor, shows how far that event had falsified the hopes of the sincerest friends of the Revolution. Events were therefore now favourable to a return from the methods of Rousseau to those of Richelieu; and the genius who was skilfully to adapt republicanism to autocracy was now at hand. Though Bonaparte desired at once to attack the Austrians in Northern Italy, yet a sure instinct impelled him to remain at Paris, for, as he said to Marmont: "When the house is crumbling, is it the time to busy oneself with the garden? A change here is indispensable."

The sudden rise of Bonaparte to supreme power cannot be understood without some reference to the state of French politics in the months preceding his return to France. The position of parties had been strangely complicated by the unpopularity of the Directors. Despite their illegal devices, the elections of 1798 and 1799 for the renewal of a third part of the legislative Councils had signally strengthened the anti-directorial ranks. Among the Opposition were some royalists, a large number of constitutionals, whether of the Feuillant or Girondin type, and many deputies, who either vaunted the name of Jacobins or veiled their advanced opinions under the convenient appellation of "patriots." Many of the deputies were young, impressionable, and likely to follow any able leader who promised to heal the schisms of the country. In fact, the old party lines were being effaced. The champions of the constitution of 1795 (Year III.) saw no better means of defending it than by violating electoral liberties—always in the sacred name of Liberty; and the Directory, while professing to hold the balance between the extreme parties, repressed them by turns with a vigour which rendered them popular and official moderation odious.

[1] "Consid. sur la Rév. Française," bk. iii., ch. xiii. See too Sciout, "Le Directoire," vol. iv., chs. xiii.-xiv.

In this general confusion and apathy the dearth of statesmen was painfully conspicuous. Only true grandeur of character can defy the withering influences of an age of disillusionment; and France had for a time to rely upon Sieyès. Perhaps no man has built up a reputation for political capacity on performances so slight as the Abbé Sieyès. In the States General of 1789 he speedily acquired renown for oracular wisdom, owing to the brevity and wit of his remarks in an assembly where such virtues were rare. But the course of the Revolution soon showed the barrenness of his mind and the timidity of his character. He therefore failed to exert any lasting influence upon events. In the time of the Terror his insignificance was his refuge. His witty reply to an inquiry how he had then fared—"J'ai vécu"—sufficiently characterizes the man. In the Directorial period he displayed more activity. He was sent as French ambassador to Berlin, and plumed himself on having persuaded that Court to a neutrality favourable to France. But it is clear that the neutrality of Prussia was the outcome of selfish considerations. While Austria tried the hazards of war, her northern rival husbanded her resources, strengthened her position as the protectress of Northern Germany, and dextrously sought to attract the nebula of middle German States into her own sphere of influence. From his task of tilting a balance which was already decided, Sieyès was recalled to Paris in May, 1799, by the news of his election to the place in the Directory vacated by Rewbell. The other Directors had striven, but in vain, to prevent his election: they knew well that this impracticable theorist would speedily paralyze the Government; for, when previously elected Director in 1795, he had refused to serve, on the ground that the constitution was thoroughly bad. He now declared his hostility to the Directory, and looked around for some complaisant military chief who should act as his tool and then be cast away. His first choice, Joubert, was killed at the battle of Novi. Moreau seems then to have been looked

on with favour; he was a republican, able in warfare and singularly devoid of skill or ambition in political matters. Relying on Moreau, Sieyès continued his intrigues, and after some preliminary fencing gained over to his side the Director Barras. But if we may believe the assertions of the royalist, Hyde de Neuville, Barras was also receiving the advances of the royalists with a view to a restoration of Louis XVIII., an event which was then quite within the bounds of probability. For the present, however, Barras favoured the plans of Sieyès, and helped him to get rid of the firmly republican Directors, La Réveillière-Lépeaux and Merlin, who were deposed (30th Prairial).[1]

The new Directors were Gohier, Roger Ducos, and Moulin; the first, an elderly respectable advocate; the second, a Girondin by early associations, but a trimmer by instinct, and therefore easily gained over by Sieyès; while the recommendation of the third, Moulin, seem to have been his political nullity and some third-rate military services in the Vendéan war. Yet the Directory of Prairial was not devoid of a spasmodic energy, which served to throw back the invaders of France. Bernadotte, the fiery Gascon, remarkable for his ardent gaze, his encircling masses of coal-black hair, and the dash of Moorish blood which ever aroused Bonaparte's respectful apprehensions, was Minister of War, and speedily formed a new army of 100,000 men: Lindet undertook to re-establish the finances by means of progressive taxes: the Chouan movement in the northern and western departments was repressed by a law legalising the seizure of hostages; and there seemed some nope that France would roll back the tide of invasion, keep her "natural frontiers," and return to normal methods of government.

Such was the position of affairs when Bonaparte's arrival inspired France with joy and the Directory with ill-concealed dread. As in 1795, so now in 1799, he appeared at Paris when French political life was in a

[1] La Réveillière-Lépeaux, "Mems.," vol. ii., ch. xliv.; Hyde de Neuville, vol. i., chs. vi.-vii.; Lavisse, "Rév. Française," p. 394.

stage of transition. If ever the Napoleonic star shone auspiciously, it was in the months when he threaded his path between Nelson's cruisers and cut athwart the maze of Sieyès' intrigues. To the philosopher's "J'ai vécu" he could oppose the crushing retort "J'ai vaincu."

The general, on meeting the thinker at Gohier's house, studiously ignored him. In truth, he was at first disposed to oust both Sieyès and Barras from the Directory. The latter of these men was odious to him for reasons both private and public. In time past he had had good reasons for suspecting Josephine's relations with the voluptuous Director, and with the men whom she met at his house. During the Egyptian campaign his jealousy had been fiercely roused in another quarter, and, as we have seen, led to an almost open breach with his wife. But against Barras he still harboured strong suspicions; and the frequency of his visits to the Director's house after returning from Egypt was doubtless due to his desire to sound the depths of his private as well as of his public immorality. If we may credit the *embarras de mensonges* which has been dignified by the name of Barras' "Memoirs," Josephine once fled to his house and flung herself at his knees, begging to be taken away from her husband; but the story is exploded by the moral which the relator clumsily tacks on, as to the good advice which he gave her.[1] While Bonaparte seems to have found no grounds for suspecting Barras on this score, he yet discovered his intrigues with various malcontents; and he saw that Barras, holding the balance of power in the Directory between the opposing pairs of colleagues, was intriguing to get the highest possible price for the betrayal of the Directory and of the constitution of 1795.

For Sieyès the general felt dislike but respect. He soon saw the advantage of an alliance with so learned a thinker, so skilful an intriguer, and so weak a man. It was, indeed, necessary; for, after making vain overtures to Gohier for the alteration of the law which excluded from the Directory men of less than forty years of age,

[1] Barras, "Mems.," vol. iv., ch. ii.

the general needed the alliance of Sieyès for the overthrow of the constitution. In a short space he gathered around him the malcontents whom the frequent crises had deprived of office, Roederer, Admiral Bruix, Réal, Cambacérès, and, above all, Talleyrand. The last-named, already known for his skill in diplomacy, had special reasons for favouring the alliance of Bonaparte and Sieyès: he had been dismissed from the Foreign Office in the previous month of July because in his hands it had proved to be too lucrative to the holder and too expensive for France. It was an open secret that, when American commissioners arrived in Paris a short time previously, for the settlement of various disputes between the two countries, they found that the negotiations would not progress until 250,000 dollars had changed hands. The result was that hostilities continued, and that Talleyrand soon found himself deprived of office, until another turn of the revolutionary kaleidoscope should restore him to his coveted place.[1] He discerned in the Bonaparte-Sieyès combination the force that would give the requisite tilt now that Moreau gave up politics.

The army and most of the generals were also ready for some change, only Bernadotte and Jourdan refusing to listen to the new proposals; and the former of these came "with sufficiently bad grace" to join Bonaparte at the time of action. The police was secured through that dextrous trimmer, the regicide Fouché, who now turned against the very men who had recently appointed him to office. Feeling sure of the soldiery and police, the innovators fixed the 18th of Brumaire as the date of their enterprise. There were many conferences at the houses of the conspirators; and one of the few vivid touches which relieve the dull tones of the Talleyrand "Memoirs" reveals the consciousness of these men that they were conspirators. Late on a night in the middle of Brumaire, Bonaparte came to Talleyrand's house to arrange details of the *coup d'état*, when the noise of

[1] "Hist. of the United States" (1801-1813), by H. Adams, vol. i., ch. xiv., and Ste. Beuve's "Talleyrand."

carriages stopping outside caused them to pale with fear that their plans were discovered. At once the diplomatist blew out the lights and hurried to the balcony, when he found that their fright was due merely to an accident to the carriages of the revellers and gamesters returning from the Palais Royal, which were guarded by gendarmes. The incident closed with laughter and jests; but it illustrates the tension of the nerves of the political gamesters, as also the mental weakness of Bonaparte when confronted by some unknown danger. It was perhaps the only weak point in his intellectual armour; but it was to be found out at certain crises of his career.

Meanwhile in the legislative Councils there was a feeling of vague disquiet. The Ancients were, on the whole, hostile to the Directory, but in the Council of Five Hundred the democratic ardour of the younger deputies foreboded a fierce opposition. Yet there also the plotters found many adherents, who followed the lead now cautiously given by Lucien Bonaparte. This young man, whose impassioned speeches had marked him out as an irreproachable patriot, was now President of that Council. No event could have been more auspicious for the conspirators. With Sieyès, Barras, and Ducos, as traitors in the Directory, with the Ancients favourable, and the junior deputies under the presidency of Lucien, the plot seemed sure of success.

The first important step was taken by the Council of Ancients, who decreed the transference of the sessions of the Councils to St. Cloud. The danger of a Jacobin plot was urged as a plea for this motion, which was declared carried without the knowledge either of the Directory as a whole, or of the Five Hundred, whose opposition would have been vehement. The Ancients then appointed Bonaparte to command the armed forces in and near Paris. The next step was to insure the abdication of Gohier and Moulin. Seeking to entrap Gohier, then the President of the Directory, Josephine invited him to breakfast on the morning of 18th Brumaire; but Gohier, suspecting a snare, remained at his official

residence, the Luxemburg Palace. None the less the Directory was doomed; for the two defenders of the institution had not the necessary quorum for giving effect to their decrees. Moulin thereupon escaped, and Gohier was kept under guard—by Moreau's soldiery![1]

Meanwhile, accompanied by a brilliant group of generals, Bonaparte proceeded to the Tuileries, where the Ancients were sitting; and by indulging in a wordy declamation he avoided taking the oath to the constitution required of a general on entering upon a new command. In the Council of Five Hundred, Lucien Bonaparte stopped the eager questions and murmurs, on the pretext that the session was only legal at St. Cloud.

There, on the next day (19th Brumaire or 10th November), a far more serious blow was to be struck. The overthrow of the Directory was a foregone conclusion. But with the Legislature it was far otherwise, for its life was still whole and vigorous. Yet, while amputating a moribund limb, the plotters did not scruple to paralyze the brain of the body politic.

Despite the adhesion of most of the Ancients to his plans, Bonaparte, on appearing before them, could only utter a succession of short, jerky phrases which smacked of the barracks rather than of the Senate. Retiring in some confusion, he regains his presence of mind among the soldiers outside, and enters the hall of the Five Hundred, intending to intimidate them not only by threats, but by armed force. At the sight of the uniforms at the door, the republican enthusiasm of the younger deputies catches fire. They fiercely assail him with cries of "Down with the tyrant! down with the Dictator! outlaw him!" In vain Lucien Bonaparte commands order. Several deputies rush at the general, and fiercely shake him by the collar. He turns faint with excitement and chagrin; but Lefebvre and a few grenadiers rushing up drag him from the hall. He comes forth like a somnambulist (says an onlooker), pursued by

[1] Gohier, "Mems.," vol. i.; Lavalette's "Mems.," ch. xxii.; Roederer, "Œuvres," vol. iii., p. 301; Madelin's "Fouché," p. 267.

BONAPARTE AT SAINT-CLOUD, NOVEMBER 10TH, 1800.

From the engraving by Helman after a drawing by Monnet, 1800.

the terrible cry, "Hors la loi!" Had the cries at once taken form in a decree, the history of the world might have been different. One of the deputies, General Augereau, fiercely demands that the motion of outlawry be put to the vote. Lucien Bonaparte refuses, protests, weeps, finally throws off his official robes, and is rescued from the enraged deputies by grenadiers whom the conspirators send in for this purpose. Meanwhile Bonaparte and his friends were hastily deliberating, when one of their number brought the news that the deputies had declared the general an outlaw. The news chased the blood from his cheek, until Sieyès, whose *sang froid* did not desert him in these civilian broils, exclaims, "Since they outlaw you, they are outlaws." This revolutionary logic recalls Bonaparte to himself. He shouts, "To arms!" Lucien, too, mounting a horse, appeals to the soldiers to free the Council from the menaces of some deputies armed with daggers, and in the pay of England, who are terrorising the majority. The shouts of command, clinched by the adroit reference to daggers and English gold, cause the troops to waver in their duty; and Lucien, pressing his advantage to the utmost, draws a sword, and, holding it towards his brother, exclaims that he will stab him if ever he attempts anything against liberty. Murat, Leclerc, and other generals enforce this melodramatic appeal by shouts for Bonaparte, which the troops excitedly take up. The drums sound for an advance, and the troops forthwith enter the hall. In vain the deputies raise the shout, "Vive la République," and invoke the constitution. Appeals to the law are overpowered by the drum and by shouts for Bonaparte; and the legislators of France fly pell-mell from the hall through doors and windows.[1]

Thus was fulfilled the prophecy which eight years pre-

[1] For the story about Aréna's dagger, raised against Bonaparte see Sciout, vol. iv., p. 652. It seems due to Lucien Bonaparte. I take the curious details about Bonaparte's sudden pallor from Roederer ("Œuvres," vol. iii., p. 302), who heard it from Montrond, Talleyrand's secretary. So Aulard, "Hist. de la Rév. Fr.," p. 699.

viously Burke had made in his immortal work on the French Revolution. That great thinker had predicted that French liberty would fall a victim to the first great general who drew the eyes of all men upon himself. "The moment in which that event shall happen, the person who really commands the army is your master, the master of your king, the master of your Assembly, the master of your whole republic."

Discussions about the *coup d'état* of Brumaire generally confuse the issue at stake by ignoring the difference between the overthrow of the Directory and that of the Legislature. The collapse of the Directory was certain to take place; but few expected that the Legislature of France would likewise vanish. For vanish it did: not for nearly half a century had France another free and truly democratic representative assembly. This result of Brumaire was unexpected by several of the men who plotted the overthrow of unpopular Directors, and hoped for the nipping of Jacobinical or royalist designs. Indeed, no event in French history is more astonishing than the dispersal of the republican deputies, most of whom desired a change of *personnel* but not a revolution in methods of government. Until a few days previously the Councils had the allegiance of the populace and of the soldiers; the troops at St. Cloud were loyal to the constitution, and respected the persons of the deputies until they were deluded by Lucien. For a few minutes the fate of France trembled in the balance; and the conspirators knew it.[1] Bonaparte confessed it by his incoherent gaspings; Sieyès had his carriage ready, with six horses, for flight; the terrible cry, "Hors la loi!" if raised against Bonaparte in the heart of Paris, would certainly have roused the populace to fury in the cause of liberty and have swept the conspirators to the guillotine. But, as it was, the affair was decided in the solitudes of St. Cloud by Lucien and a battalion of soldiers.

Efforts have frequently been made to represent the

[1] Talleyrand, "Mems.," vol. i., part ii.; Marmont, bk. v.

events of Brumaire as inevitable and to dovetail them in with a pretended philosophy of history. But it is impossible to study them closely without observing how narrow was the margin between the success and failure of the plot, and how jagged was the edge of an affair which philosophizers seek to fit in with their symmetrical explanations. In truth, no event of world-wide importance was ever decided by circumstances so trifling. "There is but one step from triumph to a fall. I have seen that in the greatest affairs a little thing has always decided important events"—so wrote Bonaparte three years before his triumph at St. Cloud: he might have written it of that event. It is equally questionable whether it can be regarded as saving France from anarchy. His admirers, it is true, have striven to depict France as trodden down by invaders, dissolved by anarchy, and saved only by the stroke of Brumaire. But she was already triumphant: it was quite possible that she would peacefully adjust her governmental difficulties: they were certainly no greater than they had been in and since the year 1797: Fouché had closed the club of the Jacobins: the Councils had recovered their rightful influence, and, but for the plotters of Brumaire, might have effected a return to ordinary government of the type of 1795-7. This was the real blow; that the vigorous trunk, the Legislature, was struck down along with the withering Directorial branch.

The friends of liberty might well be dismayed when they saw how tamely France accepted this astounding stroke. Some allowance was naturally to be made, at first, for the popular apathy: the Jacobins, already discouraged by past repression, were partly dazed by the suddenness of the blow, and were also ignorant of the aims of the men who dealt it; and while they were waiting to see the import of events, power passed rapidly into the hands of Bonaparte and his coadjutors. Such is an explanation, in part at least, of the strange docility now shown by a populace which still vaunted its loyalty to the democratic republic. But there is another ex-

planation, which goes far deeper. The revolutionary strifes had wearied the brain of France and had predisposed it to accept accomplished facts. Distracted by the talk about royalist plots and Jacobin plots, cowering away from the white ogre and the red spectre, the more credulous part of the populace was fain to take shelter under the cloak of a great soldier, who at least promised order. Everything favoured the drill-sergeant theory of government. The instincts developed by a thousand years of monarchy had not been rooted out in the last decade. They now prompted France to rally round her able man ; and, abandoning political liberty as a hopeless quest, she obeyed the imperious call which promised to revivify the order and brilliance of her old existence with the throbbing blood of her new life.

The French constitution was now to be reconstructed by a self-appointed commission which sat with closed doors. This strange ending to all the constitution-building of a decade was due to the adroitness of Lucien Bonaparte. At the close of that eventful day, the 19th of Brumaire, he gathered about him in the deserted hall at St. Cloud some score or so of the dispersed deputies known to be favourable to his brother, declaimed against the Jacobins, whose spectral plot had proved so useful to the real plotters, and proposed to this "Rump" of the Council the formation of a commission who should report on measures that were deemed necessary for the public safety. The measures were found to be the deposition of the Directory, the expulsion of sixty-one members from the Councils, the nomination of Sieyès, Roger Ducos, and Bonaparte as provisional Consuls and the adjournment of the Councils for four months. The Consuls accordingly took up their residence in the Luxemburg Palace, just vacated by the Directors, and the drafting of a constitution was confided to them and to an *interim* commission of fifty members chosen equally from the two Councils.

The illegality of these devices was hidden beneath a cloak of politic clemency. To this commission the

Consuls, or rather Bonaparte—for his will soon dominated that of Sieyès—proposed two most salutary changes. He desired to put an end to the seizure of hostages from villages suspected of royalism; and also to the exaction of taxes levied on a progressive scale, which harassed the wealthy without proportionately benefiting the exchequer. These two expedients, adopted by the Directory in the summer of 1799, were temporary measures adopted to stem the tide of invasion and to crush revolts; but they were regarded as signs of a permanently terrorist policy, and their removal greatly strengthened the new consular rule. The blunder of nearly all the revolutionary governments had been in continuing severe laws after the need for them had ceased to be pressing. Bonaparte, with infinite tact, discerned this truth, and, as will shortly appear, set himself to found his government on the support of that vast neutral mass which was neither royalist nor Jacobin, which hated the severities of the reds no less than the abuses of the *ancien régime.*

While Bonaparte was conciliating the many, Sieyès was striving to body forth the constitution which for many years had been nebulously floating in his brain. The function of the Socratic μαιεύτης was discharged by Boulay de la Meurthe, who with difficulty reduced those ideas to definite shape. The new constitution was based on the principle: "Confidence comes from below, power from above." This meant that the people, that is, all adult males, were admitted only to the preliminary stages of election of deputies, while the final act of selection was to be made by higher grades or powers. The "confidence" required of the people was to be shown not only towards their nominees, but towards those who were charged with the final and most important act of selection. The winnowing processes in the election of representatives were to be carried out on a decimal system. The adult voters meeting in their several districts were to choose one-tenth of their number, this tenth being named the Notabilities of the Commune. These, some five or

six hundred thousand in number, meeting in their several Departments, were thereupon to choose one-tenth of their number; and the resulting fifty or sixty thousand men, termed Notabilities of the Departments, were again to name one-tenth of their number, who were styled Notabilities of the Nation. But the most important act of selection was still to come—from above. From this last-named list the governing powers were to select the members of the legislative bodies and the chief officials and servants of the Government.

The executive now claims a brief notice. The well-worn theory of the distinction of powers, that is, the legislative and executive powers, was maintained in Sieyès' plan. At the head of the Government the philosopher desired to enthrone an august personage, the Grand Elector, who was to be selected by the Senate. This Grand Elector was to nominate two Consuls, one for peace, the other for war; they were to nominate the Ministers of State, who in their turn selected the agents of power from the list of Notabilities of the Nation. The two Consuls and their Ministers administered the executive affairs. The Senate, sitting in dignified ease, was merely to safeguard the constitution, to elect the Grand Elector, and to select the members of the *Corps Législatif* (proper) and the Tribunate.

Distrust of the former almost superhuman activity in law-making now appeared in divisions, checks, and balances quite ingenious in their complexity. The Legislature was divided into three councils: the *Corps Législatif*, properly so called, which listened in silence to proposals of laws offered by the Council of State and criticised or orally approved by the Tribunate.[1] These three bodies were not only divided, but were placed in opposition, especially the two talking bodies, which re-

[1] Napoleon explained to Metternich in 1812 why he wished to silence the *Corps Législatif:* "In France everyone runs after applause: they want to be noticed and applauded. . . . Silence an Assembly, which, if it is anything, must be deliberative, and you discredit it."—Metternich's "Memoirs," vol. i., p. 151.

sembled plaintiff and defendant pleading before a gagged judge. But even so the constitution was not sufficiently guarded against Jacobins or royalists. If by any chance a dangerous proposal were forced through these mutually distrustful bodies, the Senate was charged with the task of vetoing it, and if the Grand Elector, or any other high official, strove to gain a perpetual dictatorship, the Senate was at once to *absorb* him into its ranks.

Moreover, lest the voters should send up too large a proportion of Jacobins or royalists, the first selection of members of the great Councils and the chief functionaries for local affairs was to be made by the Consuls, who thus primarily exercised not only the "power from above," but also the "confidence" which ought to have come from below. Perhaps this device was necessary to set in motion Sieyès' system of wheels within wheels; for the Senate, which was to elect the Grand Elector, by whom the executive officers were indirectly to be chosen, was in part self-sufficient: the Consuls named the first members, who then co-opted, that is, chose the new members. Some impulse from without was also needed to give the constitution life; and this impulse was now to come. Where Sieyès had only contrived wheels, checks, regulator, break, and safety-valve, there now rushed in an imperious will which not only simplified the parts but supplied an irresistible motive power.

The complexity of much of the mechanism, especially that relating to popular election and the legislature, entirely suited Bonaparte. But, while approving the triple winnowing, to which Sieyès subjected the results of manhood suffrage, and the subordination of the legislative to the executive authority,[1] the general expressed his entire disapproval of the limitations of the Grand Elector's powers. The name was anti-republican: let it be changed to First Consul. And whereas Sieyès

[1] This was still further assured by the first elections under the new system being postponed till 1801; the functionaries chosen by the Consuls were then placed on the lists of notabilities of the nation without vote. The constitution was put in force Dec. 25th, 1799.

condemned his grand functionary to the repose of a *roi fainéant*, Bonaparte secured to him practically all the powers assigned by Sieyès to the Consuls for Peace and for War. Lastly, Bonaparte protested against the right of absorbing him being given to the Senate. Here also he was successful; and thus a delicately poised bureaucracy was turned into an almost unlimited dictatorship.

This metamorphosis may well excite wonder. But, in truth, Sieyès and his colleagues were too weary and sceptical to oppose the one "intensely practical man." To Bonaparte's trenchant reasons and incisive tones the theorist could only reply by a scornful silence broken by a few bitter retorts. To the irresistible power of the general he could only oppose the subtlety of a student. And, indeed, who can picture Bonaparte, the greatest warrior of the age, delegating the control of all warlike operations to a Consul for War while Austrian cannon were thundering in the county of Nice and British cruisers were insulting the French coasts? It was inevitable that the reposeful Grand Elector should be transformed into the omnipotent First Consul, and that these powers should be wielded by Bonaparte himself.[1]

The extent of the First Consul's powers, as finally settled by the joint commission, was as follows. He had the direct and sole nomination of the members of the general administration, of those of the departmental and municipal councils, and of the administrators, afterwards called prefects and sub-prefects. He also appointed all military and naval officers, ambassadors and agents sent to foreign Powers, and the judges in civil and criminal suits, except the *juges de paix* and, later on, the members of the *Cour de Cassation*. He therefore controlled the army, navy, and diplomatic service, as well as the general administration. He also signed treaties, though these might be discussed, and must be ratified, by the legislative bodies. The three Consuls were to reside in the Tuileries palace; but, apart from the en-

[1] Roederer, "Œuvres," vol. iii., p. 303. He was the go-between for Bonaparte and Sieyès.

joyment of 150,000 francs a year, and occasional consultation by the First Consul, the position of these officials was so awkward that Bonaparte frankly remarked to Roederer that it would have been better to call them Grand Councillors. They were, in truth, supernumeraries added to the chief of the State, as a concession to the spirit of equality and as a blind to hide the reality of the new despotism. All three were to be chosen for ten years, and were re-eligible.

Such is an outline of the constitution of 1799 (Year VIII.). It was promulgated on December 15th, 1799, and was offered to the people for acceptance, in a proclamation which closed with the words: "Citizens, the Revolution is confined to the principles which commenced it. It is finished." The news of this last fact decided the enthusiastic acceptance of the constitution. In a *plébiscite*, or mass vote of the people, held in the early days of 1800, it was accepted by an overwhelming majority, viz., by 3,011,007 as against only 1,562 negatives. No fact so forcibly proves the failure of absolute democracy in France; and, whatever may be said of the methods of securing this national acclaim, it was, and must ever remain, the soundest of Bonaparte's titles to power. To a pedant who once inquired about his genealogy he significantly replied: "It dates from Brumaire."

Shortly before the *plébiscite*, Sieyès and Ducos resigned their temporary commissions as Consuls: they were rewarded with seats in the Senate; and Sieyès, in consideration of his constitutional work, received the estate of Crosne from the nation.

> "Sieyès à Bonaparte a fait present du trône,
> Sous un pompeux débris croyant l'ensevelir.
> Bonaparte à Sieyès a fait present de Crosne
> Pour le payer et l'avilir."

The sting in the tail of Lebrun's epigram struck home. Sieyès' acceptance of Crosne was, in fact, his acceptance of notice to quit public affairs, in which he had always

moved with philosophic disdain. He lived on to the year 1836 in dignified ease, surveying with Olympian calm the storms of French and Continental politics.

The two new Consuls were Cambacérès and Lebrun. The former was known as a learned jurist and a tactful man. He had voted for the death of Louis XVI., but his subsequent action had been that of a moderate, and his knowledge of legal affairs was likely to be of the highest service to Bonaparte, who intrusted him with a general oversight of legislation. His tact was seen in his refusal to take up his abode in the Tuileries, lest, as he remarked to Lebrun, he might have to move out again soon. The third Consul, Lebrun, was a moderate with leanings towards constitutional royalty. He was to prove another useful satellite to Bonaparte, who intrusted him with the general oversight of finance and regarded him as a connecting link with the moderate royalists. The chief secretary to the Consuls was Maret, a trusty political agent, who had striven for peace with England both in 1793 and in 1797.

As for the Ministers, they were now reinforced by Talleyrand, who took up that of Foreign Affairs, and by Berthier, who brought his powers of hard work to that of War, until he was succeeded for a time by Carnot. Lucien Bonaparte, and later Chaptal, became Minister of the Interior, Gaudin controlled Finance, Forfait the Navy, and Fouché the Police. The Council of State was organized in the following sections; that of *War*, which was presided over by General Brune: *Marine*, by Admiral Gantheaume: *Finance*, by Defermon: *Legislation*, by Boulay de la Meurthe: the *Interior*, by Roederer.

The First Consul soon showed that he intended to adopt a non-partisan and thoroughly national policy. That had been, it is true, the aim of the Directors in their policy of balance and repression of extreme parties on both sides. For the reasons above indicated, they had failed: but now a stronger and more tactful grasp was to succeed in a feat which naturally became easier every year that removed the passions of the revolutionary epoch further

NAPOLEON ADDRESSING THE TROOPS BEFORE THE BATTLE OF THE PYRAMIDS, 1798.

THE THREE CONSULS.

BONAPARTE.

CAMBACÉRÈS. LE BRUN.

MEDALS.

From Delaroche's "Trésor de Numismatique."

into the distance. Men cannot for ever perorate, and agitate and plot. A time infallibly comes when an able leader can successfully appeal to their saner instincts: and that hour had now struck. Bonaparte's appeal was made to the many, who cared not for politics, provided that they themselves were left in security and comfort: it was urged quietly, persistently, and with the reserve power of a mighty prestige and of overwhelming military force. Throughout the whole of the Consulate, a policy of moderation, which is too often taken for weakness, was strenuously carried through by the strongest man and the greatest warrior of the age.

The truly national character of his rule was seen in many ways. He excluded from high office men who were notorious regicides, excepting a few who, like Fouché, were too clever to be dispensed with. The constitutionals of 1791 and even declared royalists were welcomed back to France, and many of the Fructidorian exiles also returned.[1] The list of *émigrés* was closed, so that neither political hatred nor private greed could misrepresent a journey as an act of political emigration. Equally generous and prudent was the treatment of Roman Catholics. Toleration was now extended to orthodox or non-juring priests, who were required merely to *promise* allegiance to the new constitution. By this act of timely clemency, orthodox priests were allowed to return to France, and they were even suffered to officiate in places where no opposition was thereby aroused.

While thus removing one of the chief grievances of the Norman, Breton and Vendéan peasants, who had risen as much for their religion as for their king, he determined to crush their revolts. The north-west, and indeed parts of the south of France, were still simmering with rebellions and brigandage. In Normandy a daring and able leader named Frotté headed a considerable band of malcontents, and still more formidable were the

[1] See the "Souvenirs" of Mathieu Dumas for the skilful manner in which Bonaparte gained over the services of this constitutional royalist and employed him to raise a body of volunteer horse.

Breton "Chouans" that followed the peasant leader Georges Cadoudal. This man was a born leader. Though but thirty years of age, his fierce courage had long marked him out as the first fighter of his race and creed. His features bespoke a bold, hearty spirit, and his massive frame defied fatigue and hardship. He struggled on; and in the autumn of 1799 fortune seemed about to favour the "whites": the revolt was spreading; and had a Bourbon prince landed in Brittany before Bonaparte returned from Egypt, the royalists might quite possibly have overthrown the Directory. But Bonaparte's daring changed the whole aspect of affairs. The news of the stroke of Brumaire gave the royalists pause. At first they believed that the First Consul would soon call back the king, and Bonaparte skilfully favoured this notion: he offered a pacification, of which some of the harassed peasants availed themselves. Georges himself for a time advised a reconciliation, and a meeting of the royalist leaders voted to a man that they desired "to have the king and you" (Bonaparte). One of them, Hyde de Neuville, had an interview with the First Consul at Paris, and has left on record his surprise at seeing the slight form of the man whose name was ringing through France. At the first glance he took him for a rather poorly dressed lackey; but when the general raised his eyes and searched him through and through with their eager fire, the royalist saw his error and fell under the spell of a gaze which few could endure unmoved. The interview brought no definite result.

Other overtures made by Bonaparte were more effective. True to his plan of dividing his enemies, he appealed to the clergy to end the civil strife. The appeal struck home to the heart or the ambitions of a cleric named Bernier. This man was but a village priest of La Vendée: yet his natural abilities gained him an ascendancy in the councils of the insurgents, which the First Consul was now victoriously to exploit. Whatever may have been Bernier's motives, he certainly acted with some

duplicity. Without forewarning Cadoudal, Bourmont, Frotté, and other royalist leaders, he secretly persuaded the less combative leaders to accept the First Consul's terms; and a pacification was arranged (January 18th). In vain did Cadoudal rage against this treachery: in vain did he strive to break the armistice. Frotté in Normandy was the last to capitulate and the first to feel Bonaparte's vengeance: on a trumped-up charge of treachery he was hurried before a court-martial and shot. An order was sent from Paris for his pardon; but a letter which Bonaparte wrote to Brune on the day of the execution contains the ominous phrase: *By this time Frotté ought to be shot;* and a recently published letter to Hédouville expresses the belief that *the punishment of that desperate leader will doubtless contribute to the complete pacification of the West.*[1]

In the hope of gaining over the Chouans, Bonaparte required their chiefs to come to Paris, where they received the greatest consideration. In Bernier the priest, Bonaparte discerned diplomatic gifts of a high order, which were soon to be tested in a far more important negotiation. The nobles, too, received flattering attentions which touched their pride and assured their future insignificance. Among them was Count Bourmont, the Judas of the Waterloo campaign.

In contrast with the priest and the nobles, Georges Cadoudal stood firm as a rock. That suave tongue spoke to him of glory, honour, and the fatherland: he heeded it not, for he knew it had ordered the death of Frotté. There stood these fighters alone, face to face, types of the north and south, of past and present, fiercest and toughest of living men, their stern wills racked in wrestle for two hours. But southern craft was foiled by Breton steadfastness, and Georges went his way unshamed. Once outside the palace, his only words to his friend, Hyde de Neuville, were: "What a mind I had to strangle him in these arms!" Shadowed by

[1] "Lettres inédites de Napoléon," February 21st, 1800; "Mémoires du Général d'Andigné," ch. xv.; Madelin's "Fouché," p. 306.

Bonaparte's spies, and hearing that he was to be arrested, he fled to England; and Normandy and Brittany enjoyed the semblance of peace.[1]

Thus ended the civil war which for nearly seven years had rent France in twain. Whatever may be said about the details of Bonaparte's action, few will deny its beneficent results on French life. Harsh and remorseless as Nature herself towards individuals, he certainly, at this part of his career, promoted the peace and prosperity of the masses. And what more can be said on behalf of a ruler at the end of a bloody revolution?

Meanwhile the First Consul had continued to develop Sieyès' constitution in the direction of autocracy. The Council of State, which was little more than an enlarged Ministry, had been charged with the vague and dangerous function of "developing the sense of laws" on the demand of the Consuls; and it was soon seen that this Council was merely a convenient screen to hide the operations of Bonaparte's will. On the other hand, a blow was struck at the Tribunate, the only public body which had the right of debate and criticism. It was now proposed (January, 1800) that the time allowed for debate should be strictly limited. This restriction to the right of free discussion met with little opposition. One of the most gifted of the new tribunes, Benjamin Constant, the friend of Madame de Staël, eloquently pleaded against this policy of distrust which would reduce the Tribunate to a silence that would be *heard by Europe.* It was in vain. The rabid rhetoric of the past had infected France with a foolish fear of all free debate. The Tribunate signed its own death warrant; and the sole result of its feeble attempt at opposition was that Madame de Staël's *salon* was forthwith deserted by the Liberals who had there found inspiration; while the gifted authoress herself was officially requested to retire into the country.

The next act of the central power struck at freedom

[1] "Georges Cadoudal," par son neveu, G de Cadoudal; Hyde de Neuville, vol. i., p. 305.

of the press. As a few journals ventured on witticisms at the expense of the new Government, the Consuls ordered the suppression of all the political journals of Paris except thirteen; and three even of these favoured papers were suppressed on April 7th. The reason given for this despotic action was the need of guiding public opinion wisely during the war, and of preventing any articles "contrary to the respect due to the social compact, to the sovereignty of the people, and to the glory of the armies." By a finely ironical touch Rousseau's doctrine of the popular sovereignty was thus invoked to sanction its violation. The incident is characteristic of the whole tendency of events, which showed that the dawn of personal rule was at hand. In fact, Bonaparte had already taken the bold step of removing to the Tuileries, and that too, on the very day when he ordered public mourning for the death of Washington (February 7th). No one but the great Corsican would have dared to brave the comments which this coincidence provoked. But he was necessary to France, and all men knew it. At the first sitting of the provisional Consuls, Ducos had said to him: "It is useless to vote about the presidence; it belongs to you of right"; and, despite the wry face pulled by Sieyès, the general at once took the chair. Scarcely less remarkable than the lack of energy in statesmen was the confusion of thought in the populace. Mme. Reinhard tells us that after the *coup d'état* people *believed they had returned to the first days of liberty*. What wonder, then, that the one able and strong-willed man led the helpless many and re-moulded Sieyès' constitution in a fashion that was thus happily parodied:

"J'ai, pour les fous, d'un Tribunat
Conservé la figure;
Pour les sots je laisse un Sénat,
Mais ce n'est qu'en peinture;
A ce stupide magistrat
Ma volonté préside;
Et tout le Conseil d'Etat
Dans mon sabre réside."

CHAPTER XI

MARENGO: LUNÉVILLE

RESERVING for the next chapter a description of the new civil institutions of France, it will be convenient now to turn to foreign affairs. Having arranged the most urgent of domestic questions, the First Consul was ready to encounter the forces of the Second Coalition. He had already won golden opinions in France by endeavouring peacefully to dissolve it. On the 25th of December, 1799, he sent two courteous letters, one to George III., the other to the Emperor Francis, proposing an immediate end to the war. The close of the letter to George III. has been deservedly admired: "France and England by the abuse of their strength may, for the misfortune of all nations, be long in exhausting it: but I venture to declare that the fate of all civilized nations is concerned in the termination of a war which kindles a conflagration over the whole world." This noble sentiment touched the imagination of France and of friends of peace everywhere.

And yet, if the circumstances of the time be considered, the first agreeable impressions aroused by the perusal of this letter must be clouded over by doubts. The First Consul had just seized on power by illegal and forcible means, and there was as yet little to convince foreign States that he would hold it longer than the men whom he had displaced. Moreover, France was in a difficult position. Her treasury was empty; her army in Italy was being edged into the narrow coast-line near Genoa; and her oriental forces were shut up in their new conquest. Were not the appeals to Austria and England

merely a skillful device to gain time? Did his past power in Italy and Egypt warrant the belief that he would abandon the peninsula and the new colony? Could the man who had bartered away Venetia and seized Malta and Egypt be fitly looked upon as the sacred'r peacemaker? In diplomacy men's words are interpreted by their past conduct and present circumstances, neither of which tended to produce confidence in Bonaparte's pacific overtures; and neither Francis nor George III. looked on the present attempt as anything but a skilful means of weakening the Coalition.

Indeed, that league was, for various reasons, all but dissolved by internal dissensions. Austria was resolved to keep all the eastern part of Piedmont and the greater part of the Genoese Republic. While welcoming the latter half of this demand, George III.'s Ministers protested against the absorption of so great a part of Piedmont as an act of cruel injustice to the King of Sardinia. Austria was annoyed at the British remonstrances and was indignant at the designs of the Czar on Corsica. Accordingly no time could have been better chosen by Bonaparte for seeking to dissolve the Coalition, as he certainly hoped to do by these two letters. Only the staunch support of legitimist claims by England then prevented the Coalition from degenerating into a scramble for Italian territories.[1] And, if we may trust the verdict of contemporaries and his own confession at St. Helena, Bonaparte never expected any other result from these letters than an increase of his popularity in France. This was enhanced by the British reply, which declared that His Majesty could not place his reliance on "general professions of pacific dispositions": France had waged aggressive war, levied exactions, and overthrown institutions in neighbouring States; and the British Government could not as yet discern any abandonment of this system: something more was required for

[1] "F. O.," Austria, No. 58; "Castlereagh's Despatches," v. *ad init.* Bowman, in his excellent monograph, "Preliminary Stages of the Peace of Amiens" (Toronto, 1899), has not noted this.

a durable peace: "The best and most natural pledge of its reality and permanence would be the restoration of that line of princes which for so many centuries maintained the French nation in prosperity at home and in consideration and respect abroad." This answer has been sharply criticised, and justly so, if its influence on public opinion be alone considered. But a perusal of the British Foreign Office Records reveals the reason for the use of these stiffly legitimist claims. Legitimacy alone promised to stop the endless shiftings of the political kaleidoscope, whether by France, Austria, or Russia. Our ambassador at Vienna was requested to inform the Government of Vienna of the exact wording of the British reply:

"As a proof of the zeal and steadiness with which His Majesty adheres to the principles of the Confederacy, and as a testimony of the confidence with which he anticipates a similar answer from His Imperial Majesty, to whom an overture of a similar nature has without doubt been made."

But this correct conduct, while admirably adapted to prop up the tottering Coalition, was equally favourable to the consolidation of Bonaparte's power. It helped to band together the French people to resist the imposition of their exiled royal house by external force. Even George III. thought it "much too strong," though he suggested no alteration. At once Bonaparte retorted in a masterly note; he ironically presumed that His Britannic Majesty admitted the right of nations to choose their form of government, since only by that right did he wear the British crown; and he invited him not to apply to other peoples a principle which would recall the Stuarts to the throne of Great Britain.

Bonaparte's diplomatic game was completely won during the debates on the King's speech at Westminster at the close of January, 1800. Lord Grenville laboriously proved that peace was impossible with a nation whose war was against all order, religion, and morality; and he cited examples of French lawlessness from Holland and

Switzerland to Malta and Egypt. Pitt declared that the French Revolution was the severest trial which Providence had ever yet inflicted on the nations of the earth; and, claiming that there was no security in negotiating with France, owing to her instability, he summed up his case in the Ciceronian phrase: *Pacem nolo quia infida.* Ministers carried the day by 260 votes to 64; but they ranged nearly the whole of France on the side of the First Consul. No triumph in the field was worth more to him than these Philippics, which seemed to challenge France to build up a strong Government in order that the Court of St. James might find some firm foundation for future negotiations.

Far more dextrous was the conduct of the Austrian diplomatists. Affecting to believe in the sincerity of the First Consul's proposa for peace, they so worded their note as to draw from him a reply that he was prepared to discuss terms of peace on the basis of the Treaty of Campo Formio.[1] As Austria had since then conquered the greater part of Italy, Bonaparte's reply immediately revealed his determination to reassert French supremacy in Italy and the Rhineland. The action of the Courts of Vienna and London was not unlike that of the sun and the wind in the proverbial saw. Viennese suavity induced Bonaparte to take off his coat and show himself as he really was: while the conscientious bluster of Grenville and Pitt made the First Consul button up his coat, and pose as the buffeted peacemaker.

The allies had good grounds for confidence. Though Russia had withdrawn from the Second Coalition yet the Austrians continued their victorious advance in Italy. In April, 1800, they severed the French forces near Savona, driving back Suchet's corps towards Nice, while the other was gradually hemmed in behind the redoubts of Genoa. There the Imperialist advance was stoutly stayed. Masséna, ably seconded by Oudinot and Soult, who now gained their first laurels as generals, maintained

[1] "Nap. Correspond.," February 27th 1800; Thugut, "Briefe" vol. ii., pp. 444-446; Oncken, "Zeitalter," vol. ii. p. 45.

a most obstinate resistance, defying alike the assaults of the white-coats, the bombs hurled by the English squadron, and the deadlier inroads of famine and sickness. The garrison dwindled by degrees to less than 10,000 effectives, but they kept double the number of Austrians there, while Bonaparte was about to strike a terrible blow against their rear and that of Melas further west. It was for this that the First Consul urged Masséna to hold out at Genoa to the last extremity, and nobly was the order obeyed.

Suchet meanwhile defended the line of the River Var against Melas. In Germany, Moreau with his larger forces slowly edged back the chief Austrian army, that of General Kray, from the defiles of the Black Forest, compelling it to fall back on the intrenched camp at Ulm.

On their side, the Austrians strove to compel Masséna to a speedy surrender, and then with a large force to press on into Nice, Provence, and possibly Savoy, surrounding Suchet's force, and rousing the French royalists of the south to a general insurrection. They also had the promise of the help of a British force, which was to be landed at some point on the coast and take Suchet in the flank or rear.[1] Such was the plan, daring in outline and promising great things, provided that everything went well. If Masséna surrendered, if the British War Office and Admiralty worked up to time, if the winds were favourable, and if the French royalists again ventured on a revolt, then France would be crippled, perhaps conquered. As for the French occupation of Switzerland and Moreau's advance into Swabia, that was not to prevent the prosecution of the original Austrian plan of advancing against Provence and wresting Nice and

[1] A Foreign Office despatch, dated Downing Street, February 8th, 1800, to Vienna, promised a loan and that 15,000 or 20,000 British troops should be employed in the Mediterranean to act in concert with the Austrians there, and to give "support to the royalist insurrections in the southern provinces of France." No differences of opinion respecting Piedmont can be held a sufficient excuse for the failure of the British Government to fulfil this promise—a failure which contributed to the disaster at Marengo.

Savoy from the French grasp. This scheme has been criticised as if it were based solely on military considerations; but it was rather dictated by schemes of political aggrandizement. The conquest of Nice and Savoy was necessary to complete the ambitious schemes of the Hapsburgs, who sought to gain a large part of Piedmont at the expense of the King of Sardinia, and after conquering Savoy and Nice, to thrust that unfortunate king to the utmost verge of the peninsula, which the prowess of his descendants has ultimately united under the Italian tricolour.

The allied plan sinned against one of the elementary rules of strategy; it exposed a large force to a blow from the rear, namely, from Switzerland. The importance of this immensely strong central position early attracted Bonaparte's attention. On the 17th of March he called his secretary, Bourrienne (so the latter states), and lay down with him on a map of Piedmont: then, placing pins tipped, some with red, others with black wax, so as to denote the positions of the troops, he asked him to guess where the French would beat their foes:

"How the devil should I know?" said Bourrienne. "Why, look here, you fool," said the First Consul: "Melas is at Alessandria with his headquarters. There he will remain until Genoa surrenders. He has at Alessandria his magazines, his hospitals, his artillery, his reserves. Crossing the Alps here (at the Great St. Bernard), I shall fall upon Melas, cut off his communications with Austria, and meet him here in the plains of the River Scrivia at San Giuliano."

I quote this passage as showing how readily such stories of ready-made plans gain credence, until they come to be tested by Napoleon's correspondence. There we find no strategic soothsaying, but only a close watching of events as they develop day by day. In March and April he kept urging on Moreau the need of an early advance, while he considered the advantages offered by the St. Gotthard, Simplon, and Great St. Bernard passes for his own army. On April 27th he decided

against the first (except for a detachment), because Moreau's advance was too slow to safeguard his rear on that route. He now preferred the Great St. Bernard, but still doubted whether, after crossing, he should make for Milan, or strike at Masséna's besiegers, in case that general should be very hard pressed. Like all great commanders, he started with a general plan, but he arranged the details as the situation required. In his letter of May 19th, he poured scorn on Parisian editors who said he prophesied that in a month he would be at Milan. "That is not in my character. Very often I do *not* say what I know: but never do I say what will be."

The better to hide his purpose, he chose as his first base of operations the city of Dijon, whence he seemed to threaten either the Swabian or the Italian army of his foes. But this was not enough. At the old Burgundian capital he assembled his staff and a few regiments of conscripts in order to mislead the English and Austrian spies; while the fighting battalions were drafted by diverse routes to Geneva or Lausanne. So skilful were these preparations that, in the early days of May, the greater part of his men and stores were near the lake of Geneva, whence they were easily transferred to the upper valley of the Rhone. In order that he might have a methodical, hard-working coadjutor he sent Berthier from the office of the Ministry of War, where he had displayed less ability than Bernadotte, to be commander-in-chief of the "army of reserve." In reality Berthier was, as before in Italy and Egypt, chief of the staff; but he had the titular dignity of commander which the constitution of 1800 forbade the First Consul to assume.

On May 6th Bonaparte left Paris for Geneva, where he felt the pulse of every movement in both campaigns. At that city, on hearing the report of his general of engineers, he decided to take the Great St. Bernard route into Italy, as against the Simplon. With redoubled energy, he now supervised the thousands of

THE PASSAGE OF MONT S. BERNARD, MAY, 1800.

From an etched plate after a painting by Thevenin.

details that were needed to insure success: for, while prone to indulging in grandiose schemes, he revelled in the work which alone could bring them within his grasp: or, as Wellington once remarked, "Nothing was too great or too small for his proboscis." The difficulties of sending a large army over the Great St. Bernard were indeed immense. That pass was chosen because it presented only five leagues of ground impracticable for carriages. But those five leagues tested the utmost powers of the army and of its chiefs. Marmont, who commanded the artillery, had devised the ingenious plan of taking the cannon from their carriages and placing them in the hollowed-out trunks of pine, so that the trunnions fitting into large notches kept them steady during the ascent over the snow and the still more difficult descent.[1] The labour of dragging the guns wore out the peasants; then the troops were invited—a hundred at a time—to take a turn at the ropes, and were exhilarated by martial airs played by the bands, or by bugles and drums sounding the charge at the worst places of the ascent.

The track sometimes ran along narrow ledges where a false step meant death, or where avalanches were to be feared. The elements, however, were propitious, and the losses insignificant. This was due to many causes: the ardour of the troops in an enterprise which appealed to French imagination and roused all their activities; the friendliness of the mountaineers; and the organizing powers of Bonaparte and of his staff; all these may be cited as elements of success. They present a striking contrast to the march of Hannibal's army over one of the western passes of the Alps. His motley host struggled over a long stretch of mountains in the short days of October over unknown paths, in one part swept away by a fall of the cliff, and ever and anon beset by clouds of treacherous Gauls. Seeing that the great Carthaginian's difficulties began long before he reached the Alps, that

[1] Thiers attributes this device to Bonaparte; but the First Consul's bulletin of May 24th ascribes it to Marmont and Gassendi.

he was encumbered by elephants, and that his army was composed of diverse races held together only by trust in the prowess of their chief, his exploit was far more wonderful than that of Bonaparte, which, indeed, more nearly resembles the crossing of the St. Bernard by Francis I. in 1515. The difference between the conditions of Hannibal's and Bonaparte's enterprises may partly be measured by the time which they occupied. Whereas Hannibal's march across the Alps lasted fifteen days, three of which were spent in the miseries of a forced halt amidst the snow, the First Consul's forces took but seven days. Whereas the Carthaginian army was weakened by hunger, the French carried their full rations of biscuit; and at the head of the pass the monks of the Hospice of St. Bernard served out the rations of bread, cheese, and wine which the First Consul had forwarded, and which their own generosity now doubled. The hospitable fathers themselves served at the tables set up in front of the Hospice.

After insuring the regular succession of troops and stores, Bonaparte himself began the ascent on May 20th. He wore the gray overcoat which had already become famous; and his features were fixed in that expression of calm self-possession which he ever maintained in face of difficulty. The melodramatic attitudes of horse and rider, which David has immortalized in his great painting, are, of course, merely symbolical of the genius of militant democracy prancing over natural obstacles and wafted onwards and upwards by the breath of victory. The living figure was remarkable only for stern self-restraint and suppressed excitement; instead of the prancing war-horse limned by David, his beast of burden was a mule, led by a peasant; and, in place of victory, he had heard that Lannes with the vanguard had found an unexpected obstacle to his descent into Italy. The narrow valley of the Dora Baltea, by which alone they could advance, was wellnigh blocked by the fort of Bard, which was firmly held by a small Austrian garrison and defied all the efforts of

Lannes and Berthier. This was the news that met the First Consul during his ascent, and again at the Hospice. After accepting the hospitality of the monks, and spending a short time in the library and chapel, he resumed his journey; and on the southern slopes he and his staff now and again amused themselves by sliding down the tracks which the passage of thousands of men had rendered slippery. After halting at Aosta, he proceeded down the valley to the fort of Bard.

Meanwhile some of his foot-soldiers had worked their way round this obstacle by a goat-track among the hills and had already reached Ivrea lower down the valley. Still the fort held out against the cannonade of the French. Its commanding position seemed to preclude all hope of getting the artillery past it; and without artillery the First Consul could not hope for success in the plains of Piedmont. Unable to capture the fort, he bethought him of hurrying by night the now remounted guns under the cover of the houses of the village. For this purpose he caused the main street to be strewn with straw and dung, while the wheels of the cannon were covered over so as to make little noise. They were then dragged quietly through the village almost within pistol shot of the garrison: nevertheless, the defenders took alarm, and, firing with musketry and grenades, exploded some ammunition wagons and inflicted other losses; yet 40 guns and 100 wagons were got past the fort.

How this unfailing resource contrasts with the heedless behaviour of the enemy! Had they speedily reinforced their detachment at Bard, there can be little doubt that Bonaparte's movements could have been seriously hampered. But, up to May 21st, Melas was ignorant that his distant rear was being assailed, and the 3,000 Austrians who guarded the vale of the Dora Baltea were divided, part being at Bard and others at Ivrea. The latter place was taken by a rush of Lannes' troops on May 22nd, and Bard was blockaded by part of the French rearguard.

Bonaparte's army, if the rearguard be included, numbered 41,000 men. Meanwhile, farther east, a French force of 15,000 men, drawn partly from Moreau's army and led by Moncey, was crossing the St. Gotthard pass and began to drive back the Austrian outposts in the upper valley of the Ticino; and 5,000 men, marching over the Mont Cenis pass, threatened Turin from the west. The First Consul's aim now was to unite the two chief forces, seize the enemy's magazines, and compel him to a complete surrender. This daring resolve took shape at Aosta on the 24th, when he heard that Melas was, on the 19th, still at Nice, unconscious of his doom. The chance of ending the war at one blow was not to be missed, even if Masséna had to shift for himself.

But already Melas' dream of triumph had vanished. On the 21st, hearing the astonishing news that a large force had crossed the St. Bernard, he left 18,000 men to oppose Suchet on the Var, and hurried back with the remainder to Turin. At the Piedmontese capital he heard that he had to deal with the First Consul; but not until the last day of May did he know that Moncey was forcing the St. Gotthard and threatening Milan. Then, realizing the full extent of his danger, he hastily called in all the available troops in order to fight his way through to Mantua. He even sent an express to the besiegers of Genoa to retire on Alessandria; but negotiations had been opened with Masséna for the surrender of that stronghold, and the opinion of Lord Keith, the English admiral, decided the Austrian commander there to press the siege to the very end. The city was in the direst straits. Horses, dogs, cats, and rats were at last eagerly sought as food: and at every sortie crowds of the starving inhabitants followed the French in order to cut down grass, nettles, and leaves, which they then boiled with salt.[1] A revolt threatened by the wretched townsfolk was averted by Masséna ordering his troops to fire on every gathering of more than four men. At

[1] Marbot, "Mems.," ch. ix.; Allardyce, "Memoir of Lord Keith," ch. xiii.; Thiébault's "Journal of the Blockade of Genoa."

last, on June 4th, with 8,000 half-starved soldiers he marched through the Austrian posts with the honours of war. The stern warrior would not hear of the word surrender or capitulation. He merely stated to the allied commanders that on June 4th his troops would evacuate Genoa or clear their path by the bayonet.

Bonaparte has been reproached for not marching at once to succour Masséna: the charge of desertion was brought by Masséna and Thiébault, and has been driven home by Lanfrey with his usual skill. It will, however, scarcely bear a close examination. The Austrians, at the first trustworthy news of the French inroads into Piedmont and Lombardy, were certain to concentrate either at Turin or Alessandria. Indeed, Melas was already near Turin, and would have fallen on the First Consul's flank had the latter marched due south towards Genoa.[1] Such a march, with only 40,000 men, would have been perilous: and it could at most only have rescued a now reduced and almost famishing garrison. Besides, he very naturally expected the besiegers of Genoa to retreat now that their rear was threatened.

Sound policy and a desire to deal a dramatic stroke spurred on the First Consul to a more daring and effective plan; to clear Lombardy of the Imperialists and seize their stores; then, after uniting with Moncey's 15,000 troops, to cut off the retreat of all the Austrian forces west of Milan.

On entering Milan he was greeted with wild acclaim by the partisans of France (June 2nd); they extolled the energy and foresight that brought two armies, as it were down from the clouds, to confound their oppressors. Numbers of men connected with the Cisalpine Republic had been proscribed, banished, or imprisoned by the

[1] That Melas expected such a march is clear from a letter of his of May 23rd, dated from Savillan, to Lord Keith, which I have found in the "Brit. Admiralty Records" (Mediterranean, No. 22), where he says: "L'ennemi a cerné le fort de Bard et s'est avancé jusque sous le château d'Ivrée. Il est clair que son but est de délivrer Masséna."

Austrians; and their friends now hailed him as the restorer of their republic. The First Consul spent seven days in selecting the men who were to rebuild the Cisalpine State, in beating back the eastern forces of Austria beyond the River Adda, and in organizing his troops and those of Moncey for the final blow. The military problems, indeed, demanded great care and judgment. His position was curiously the reverse of that which he had occupied in 1796. Then the French held Tortona, Alessandria, and Valenza, and sought to drive back the Austrians to the walls of Mantua. Now the Imperialists, holding nearly the same positions, were striving to break through the French lines which cut them off from that city of refuge; and Bonaparte, having forces slightly inferior to his opponents, felt the difficulty of frustrating their escape.

Three routes were open to Melas. The most direct was by way of Tortona and Piacenza along the southern bank of the Po, through the difficult defile of Stradella: or he might retire towards Genoa, across the Apennines, and regain Mantua by a dash across the Modenese: or he might cross the Po at Valenza and the Ticino near Pavia. All these roads had to be watched by the French as they cautiously drew towards their quarry. Bonaparte's first move was to send Murat with a considerable body of troops to seize Piacenza and to occupy the defile of Stradella. These important posts were wrested from the Austrian vanguard; and this success was crowned on June 9th by General Lannes' brilliant victory at Montebello over a superior Austrian force marching from Genoa towards Piacenza, which he drove back towards Alessandria. Smaller bodies of French were meanwhile watching the course of the Ticino, and others seized the magazines of the enemy at Cremona.

After gaining precious news as to Melas' movements from an intercepted despatch, Bonaparte left Milan on June 9th, and proceeded to Stradella. There he waited for news of Suchet and Masséna from the side of Savona and Ceva; for their forces, if united, might

complete the circle which he was drawing around the Imperialists.[1] He hoped that Masséna would have joined Suchet near Savona; but owing to various circumstances, for which Masséna was in no wise to blame, their junction was delayed; and Suchet, though pressing on towards Acqui, was unable to cut off the Austrian retreat on Genoa. Yet he so harassed the corps opposed to him in its retreat from Nice that only about 8,000 Austrians joined Melas from that quarter.[2]

Doubtless, Melas' best course would still have been to make a dash for Genoa and trust to the English ships. But this plan galled the pride of the general, who had culled plenteous laurels in Italy until the approach of Bonaparte threatened to snatch the whole chaplet from his brow. He and his staff sought to restore their drooping fortunes by a bold rush against the ring of foes that were closing around. Never has an effort of this kind so nearly succeeded and yet so wholly failed.

The First Consul, believing that the Austrians were bent solely on flight, advanced from Stradella, where success would have been certain, into the plains of Tortona, whence he could check any move of theirs southwards on Genoa. But now the space which he occupied was so great as to weaken his line at any one point; while his foes had the advantage of the central position.

[1] Bonaparte did not leave Milan till June 9th: see "Correspondance" and the bulletin of June 10th. Jomini places his departure for the 7th, and thereby confuses his description for these two days. Thiers dates it on June 8th.

[2] Lord W. Bentinck reported to the Brit. Admiralty ("Records," Meditn., No. 22), from Alessandria, on June 15th: "I am sorry to say that General Elsnitz's corps, which was composed of the grenadiers of the finest regiments in the (Austrian) army, arrived here in the most deplorable condition. His men had already suffered much from want of provisions and other hardships. He was pursued in his retreat by Genl. Suchet, who had with him about 7,000 men. There was an action at Ponte di Nava, in which the French failed; and it will appear scarcely credible, when I tell your Lordship, that the Austrians lost in this retreat, from fatigue only, near 5,000 men; and I have no doubt that Genl. Suchet will notify this to the world as a great victory."

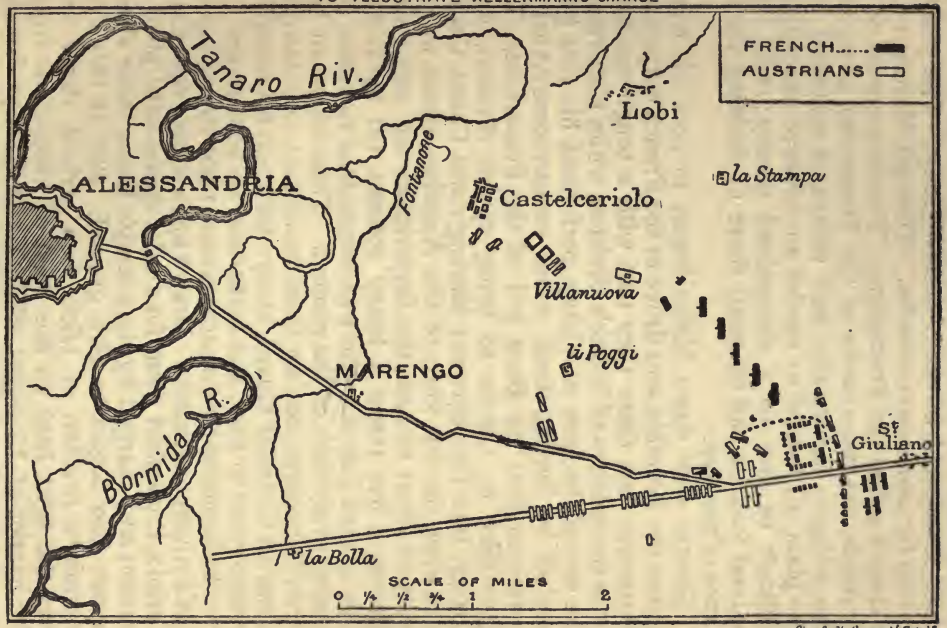
Bonaparte was also forced to those enveloping tactics which had so often proved fatal to the Austrians four years previously; and this curious reversal of his usual tactics may account for the anxiety which he betrayed as he moved towards Marengo. He had, however, recently been encouraged by the arrival of Desaix from Paris after his return from Egypt. This dashing officer and noble man inspired him with a sincere affection, as was seen by the three hours of eager converse which he held with him on his arrival, as also by his words to Bourrienne: "He is quite an antique character." Desaix with 5,300 troops was now despatched on the night of June 13th towards Genoa to stop the escape of the Austrians in that direction. This eccentric move has been severely criticised: but the facts, as then known by Bonaparte, seemed to show that Melas was about to march on Genoa. The French vanguard under Gardane had in the afternoon easily driven the enemy's front from the village of Marengo; and Gardane had even reported that there was no bridge over the River Bormida by which the enemy could debouch into the plain of Marengo. Marmont, pushing on later in the evening, had discovered that there was at least one well-defended bridge; and when early next morning Gardane's error was known, the First Consul, with a blaze of passion against the offender, sent a courier in hot haste to recall Desaix. Long before he could arrive, the battle of Marengo had begun: and for the greater part of that eventful day, June the 14th, the French had only 18000 men wherewith to oppose the onset of 31,000 Austrians.[1]

As will be seen by the accompanying map, the village of Marengo lies in the plain that stretches eastwards from the banks of the River Bormida towards the hilly

[1] The inaccuracy of Marbot's "Mémoires" is nowhere more glaring than in his statement that Marengo must have gone against the French if Ott's 25,000 Austrians from Genoa had joined their comrades. As a matter of fact, Ott, with 16,000 men, had *already* fought with Lannes at Montebello, and played a great part in the battle of Marengo.

BATTLE OF MARENGO

TO ILLUSTRATE KELLERMANN'S CHARGE



country of Stradella. The village lies on the high-road leading eastwards from the fortress of Alessandria, the chief stronghold of north-western Italy. The plain is cut up by numerous obstacles. Through Marengo runs a stream called the Fontanone. The deep curves of the Bormida, the steep banks of the Fontanone, along with the villages, farmsteads, and vineyards scattered over the plain, all helped to render an advance exceedingly difficult in face of a determined enemy; and these natural features had no small share in deciding the fortunes of the day.

Shortly after dawn Melas began to pour his troops across the Bormida, and drove in the French outposts on Marengo: but there they met with a tough resistance from the soldiers of Victor's division, while Kellermann, the son of the hero of Valmy, performed his first great exploit by hurling back some venturesome Austrian horsemen into the deep bed of the Fontanone. This gave time to Lannes to bring up his division, 5,000 strong, into line between Marengo and Castel Ceriolo. But when the full force of the Austrian attack was developed about 10 a.m., the Imperialists not only gained Marengo, but threw a heavy column, led by General Ott, against Lannes, who was constrained to retire, contesting every inch of the ground. Thus, when, an hour later, Bonaparte rode up from the distant rear, hurrying along his Consular Guard, his eye fell upon his battalions overpowered in front and outflanked on both wings. At once he launched his Consular Guard, 1,000 strong, against Ott's triumphant ranks. Drawn up in square near Castel Ceriolo, it checked them for a brief space, until, plied by cannon and charged by the enemy's horse, these chosen troops also began to give ground. But at this crisis Monnier's division of 3,600 men arrived, threw itself into the fight, held up the flood of white-coats around the hamlet of Li Poggi, while Carra St. Cyr fastened his grip on Castel Ceriolo. Under cover of this welcome screen, Victor and Lannes restored some order to their divisions and checked for a time the onsets of

THE BATTLE OF MARENGO.

From a contemporary engraving in the Municipal Archives of Alessandria.

the enemy. Slowly but surely, however, the impact of the Austrian main column, advancing along the high-road, made them draw back on San Giuliano.

By 2 p.m. the battle seemed to be lost for the French; except on the north of their line they were in full retreat, and all but five of their cannon were silenced. Melas, oppressed by his weight of years, by the terrific heat, and by two slight wounds, retired to Alessandria, leaving his chief of the staff, Zach, to direct the pursuit. But, unfortunately, Melas had sent back 2,200 horsemen to watch the district between Alessandria and Acqui, to which latter place Suchet's force was advancing. To guard against this remoter danger, he weakened his attacking force at the critical time and place; and now, when the Austrians approached the hill of San Giuliano with bands playing and colours flying, their horse was not strong enough to complete the French defeat. Still, such was the strength of their onset that all resistance seemed unavailing, until about 5 p.m. the approach of Desaix breathed new life and hope into the defence. At once he rode up to the First Consul; and if vague rumours may be credited, he was met by the eager question: "Well, what do you think of it?" To which he replied: "The battle is lost, but there is time to gain another." Marmont, who heard the conversation, denies that these words were uttered; and they presume a boldness of which even Desaix would scarcely have been guilty to his chief. What he unquestionably did urge was the immediate use of artillery to check the Austrian advance: and Marmont, hastily reinforcing his own five guns with thirteen others, took a strong position and riddled the serried ranks of the enemy as, swathed in clouds of smoke and dust, they pressed blindly forward. The First Consul disposed the troops of Desaix behind the village and a neighbouring hill; while at a little distance on the French left, Kellermann was ready to charge with his heavy cavalry as opportunity offered.

It came quickly. Marmont's guns unsteadied Zach's

grenadiers: Desaix's men plied them with musketry; and while they were preparing for a last effort, Kellermann's heavy cavalry charged full on their flank. Never was surprise more complete. The column was cut in twain by this onset; and veterans, who but now seemed about to overbear all obstacles, were lying mangled by grapeshot, hacked by sabres, flying helplessly amidst the vineyards, or surrendering by hundreds. A panic spread to their comrades; and they gave way on all sides before the fiercely rallying French. The retreat became a rout as the recoiling columns neared the bridges of the Bormida: and night closed over a scene of wild confusion, as the defeated army, thrust out from the shelter of Marengo, flung itself over the river into the stronghold of Alessandria.

Such was the victory of Marengo. It was dearly bought; for, apart from the heavy losses, amounting on either side to about one-third of the number engaged, the victors sustained an irreparable loss in the death of Desaix, who fell in the moment when his skill and vigour snatched victory from defeat. The victory was immediately due to Kellermann's brilliant charge; and there can be no doubt, in spite of Savary's statements, that this young officer made the charge on his own initiative. Yet his onset could have had little effect, had not Desaix shaken the enemy and left him liable to a panic like that which brought disaster to the Imperialists at Rivoli. Bonaparte's dispositions at the crisis were undoubtedly skilful; but in the first part of the fight his conduct was below his reputation. We do not hear of him electrifying his disordered troops by any deed comparable with that of Cæsar, when, shield in hand, he flung himself among the legionaries to stem the torrent of the Nervii. At the climax of the fight he uttered the words "Soldiers, remember it is my custom to bivouac on the field of battle"—tame and egotistical words considering the gravity of the crisis.

On the evening of the great day, while paying an exaggerated compliment to Bessières and the cavalry of

the Consular Guard, he merely remarked to Kellermann: "You made a very good charge"; to which that officer is said to have replied: "I am glad you are satisfied, general: for it has placed the crown on your head." Such pettiness was unworthy of the great captain who could design and carry through the memorable campaign of Marengo. If the climax was not worthy of the inception, yet the campaign as a whole must be pronounced a masterpiece. Since the days of Hannibal no design so daring and original had startled the world. A great Austrian army was stopped in its victorious career, was compelled to turn on its shattered communications, and to fight for its existence some 120 miles to the rear of the territory which it seemed to have conquered. In fact, the allied victories of the past year were effaced by this march of Bonaparte's army, which, in less than a month after the ascent of the Alps, regained Nice, Piedmont, and Lombardy, and reduced the Imperialists to the direst straits.

Staggered by this terrific blow, Melas and his staff were ready to accept any terms that were not deeply humiliating; and Bonaparte on his side was not loth to end the campaign in a blaze of glory. He consented that the Imperial troops should retire to the east of the Mincio, except at Peschiera and Mantua, which they were still to occupy. These terms have been variously criticised: Melas has been blamed for cowardice in surrendering the many strongholds, including Genoa, which his men firmly held. Yet it must be remembered that he now had at Alessandria less than 20,000 effectives, and that 30,000 Austrians in isolated bodies were practically at the mercy of the French between Savona and Brescia. One and all they could now retire to the Mincio and there resume the defence of the Imperial territories. The political designs of the Court of Vienna on Piedmont were of course shattered; but it now recovered the army which it had heedlessly sacrificed to territorial greed. Bonaparte has also been blamed for the lenience of his terms. Severer conditions could

doubtless have been extorted; but he now merged the soldier in the statesman. He desired peace for the sake of France and for his own sake. After this brilliant stroke peace would be doubly grateful to a people that longed for glory but also yearned to heal the wounds of eight years' warfare. His own position as First Consul was as yet ill-established; and he desired to be back at Paris so as to curb the restive Tribunate, overawe Jacobins and royalists, and rebuild the institutions of France.

Impelled by these motives, he penned to the Emperor Francis an eloquent appeal for peace, renewing his offer of treating with Austria on the basis of the treaty of Campo Formio.[1] But Austria was not as yet so far humbled as to accept such terms; and it needed the master-stroke of Moreau at the great battle of Hohenlinden (December 2nd, 1800), and the turning of her fortresses on the Mincio by the brilliant passage of the Splügen in the depths of winter by Macdonald—a feat far transcending that of Bonaparte at the St. Bernard—to compel her to a peace. A description of these events would be beyond the scope of this work; and we now return to consider the career of Bonaparte as a statesman.

After a brief stay at Milan and Turin, where he was received as the liberator of Italy, the First Consul crossed the Alps by the Mont Cenis pass and was received with rapturous acclaim at Lyons and Paris. He had been absent from the capital less than two calendar months.

He now sent a letter to the Czar Paul, offering that, if the French garrison of Malta were compelled by famine to evacuate that island, he would place it in the hands of the Czar, as Grand Master of the Knights of St. John. Rarely has a "Greek gift" been more skilfully tendered. In the first place, Valetta was so closely blockaded by Nelson's cruisers and invested by the native Maltese

[1] "Corresp.," vol. vi., p. 365. Fournier, "Hist. Studien und Skizzen," p. 189, argues that the letter was written from Milan, and dated from Marengo for effect.

that its surrender might be expected in a few weeks; and the First Consul was well aware how anxiously the Czar had been seeking to gain a foothold at Malta, whence he could menace Turkey from the south-east. In his wish completely to gain over Russia, Bonaparte also sent back, well-clad and well-armed, the prisoners taken from the Russian armies in 1799, a step which was doubly appreciated at Petersburg because the Russian troops which had campaigned with the Duke of York in Holland were somewhat shabbily treated by the British Government in the Channel Islands, where they took up their winter quarters. Accordingly the Czar now sent Kalicheff to Paris, for the formation of a Franco-Russian alliance. He was warmly received. Bonaparte promised in general terms to restore the King of Sardinia to his former realm and the Pope to his States. On his side, the Czar sent the alluring advice to Bonaparte to found a dynasty and thereby put an end to the revolutionary principles which had armed Europe against France. He also offered to recognize the natural frontiers of France, the Rhine and the Maritime Alps, and claimed that German affairs should be regulated under his own mediation. When both parties were so complaisant, a bargain was easily arranged. France and Russia accordingly joined hands in order to secure predominance in the affairs of Central and Southern Europe, and to counterbalance England's supremacy at sea.

For it was not enough to break up the Second Coalition and recover Northern Italy. Bonaparte's policy was more than European; it was oceanic. England must be beaten on her own element: then and then only could the young warrior secure his grasp on Egypt and return to his oriental schemes. His correspondence before and after the Marengo campaign reveals his eagerness for a peace with Austria and an alliance with Russia. His thoughts constantly turn to Egypt. He bargains with Britain that his army there may be revictualled, and so words his claim that troops can easily

be sent also. Lord Grenville refuses (September 10th); whereupon Bonaparte throws himself eagerly into further plans for the destruction of the islanders. He seeks to inflame the Czar's wrath against the English maritime code. His success for the time is complete. At the close of 1800 the Russian Emperor marshals the Baltic Powers for the overthrow of England's navy, and outstrips Bonaparte's wildest hopes by proposing a Franco-Russian invasion of India with a view to "dealing his enemy a mortal blow." This plan, as drawn up at the close of 1800, arranged for the mustering of 35,000 Russians at Astrakan; while as many French were to fight their way to the mouth of the Danube, set sail on Russian ships for the Sea of Azov, join their allies on the Caspian Sea, sail to its southern extremity, and, rousing the Persians and Afghans by the hope of plunder, sweep the British from India. The scheme received from Bonaparte a courteous perusal; but he subjected it to several criticisms, which led to less patient rejoinders from the irascible potentate. Nevertheless, Paul began to march his troops towards the lower Volga, and several polks of Cossacks had crossed that river on the ice, when the news of his assassination cut short the scheme.[1]

The grandiose schemes of Paul vanished with their fantastic contriver; but the *rapprochement* of Russia to revolutionary France was ultimately to prove an event of far-reaching importance; for the eastern power thereby began to exert on the democracy of western Europe that subtle, semi-Asiatic influence which has so powerfully warped its original character.

The dawn of the nineteenth century witnessed some startling rearrangements on the political chess-board.

[1] See Czartoryski's "Memoirs," ch. xi., and Driault's "La Question d'Orient," ch. iii. The British Foreign Office was informed of the plan. In its records (No. 614) is a memoir (pencilled on the back January 31st, 1801) from a M. Leclerc to Mr. Flint, referring the present proposal back to that offered by M. de St. Génie to Catherine II., and proposing that the first French step should be the seizure of Socotra and Perim.

While Bonaparte brought Russia and France to sudden amity, the unbending maritime policy of Great Britain leagued the Baltic Powers against the mistress of the seas. In the autumn of 1800 the Czar Paul, after hearing of our capture of Malta, forthwith revived the Armed Neutrality League of 1780 and opposed the forces of Russia, Prussia, Sweden, and Denmark to the might of England's navy. But Nelson's brilliant success at Copenhagen and the murder of the Czar by a palace conspiracy shattered this league only four months after its formation, and the new Czar, Alexander, reverted for a time to friendship with England.[1] This sudden ending to the first Franco-Russia alliance so enraged Bonaparte that he caused a paragraph to be inserted in the official "Moniteur," charging the British Government with procuring the assassination of Paul, an insinuation that only proclaimed his rage at this sudden rebuff to his hitherto successful diplomacy. Though foiled for a time, he never lost sight of the hoped-for alliance, which, with a deft commixture of force and persuasion, he gained seven years later after the crushing blow of Friedland.

Dread of a Franco-Russian alliance undoubtedly helped to compel Austria to a peace. Humbled by Moreau at the great battle of Hohenlinden, the Emperor Francis opened negotiations at Lunéville in Lorraine. The subtle obstinacy of Cobenzl there found its match in the firm yet suave diplomacy of Joseph Bonaparte, who wearied out Cobenzl himself, until the march of Moreau towards Vienna compelled Francis to accept the River Adige as his boundary in Italy. The other terms of the treaty (February 9th, 1801) were practically the same as those of the treaty of Campo Formio, save that the Hapsburg Grand Duke of Tuscany was

[1] Garden, "Traités," vol. vi., ch. xxx.; Captain Mahan's "Life of Nelson," vol. ii., ch. xvi.; Thiers, "Consulate," bk. ix. For the assassination of the Czar Paul see "Kaiser Paul's Ende," von R. R. (Stuttgart, 1897); also Czartoryski's "Memoirs," chs. xiii.-xiv. For Bonaparte's offer of a naval truce to us and his overture of December, 1800, see Bowman, *op. cit.*

compelled to surrender his State to a son of the Bourbon Duke of Parma. He himself was to receive "compensation" in Germany, where also the unfortunate Duke of Modena was to find consolation in the district of the Breisgau on the Upper Rhine. The helplessness of the old Holy Roman Empire was, indeed, glaringly displayed; for Francis now admitted the right of the French to interfere in the rearrangement of that medley of States. He also recognized the Cisalpine, Ligurian, Helvetic, and Batavian Republics, as at present constituted; but their independence, and the liberty of their peoples to choose what form of government they thought fit, were expressly stipulated.

The Court of Naples also made peace with France by the treaty of Florence (March, 1801), whereby it withdrew its troops from the States of the Church, and closed its ports to British and Turkish ships; it also renounced in favour of the French Republic all its claims over a maritime district of Tuscany known as the Présidii, the little principality of Piombino, and a port in the Isle of Elba. These cessions fitted in well with Napoleon's schemes for the proposed elevation of the heir of the Duchy of Parma to the rank of King of Tuscany or Etruria. The King of Naples also pledged himself to admit and support a French corps in his dominions. Soult with 10,000 troops thereupon occupied Otranto, Taranto, and Brindisi, in order to hold the Neapolitan Government to its engagements, and to facilitate French intercourse with Egypt.

In his relations with the New World Bonaparte had also prospered. Certain disputes between France and the United States had led to hostilities in the year 1798. Negotiations for peace were opened in March, 1800, and led to the treaty of Morfontaine, which enabled Bonaparte to press on the Court of Madrid the scheme of the Parma-Louisiana exchange, that promised him a magnificent empire on the banks of the Mississippi.

These and other grandiose designs were confided only to Talleyrand and other intimate counsellors. But, even

to the mass of mankind, the transformation scene ushered in by the nineteenth century was one of bewildering brilliance. Italy from the Alps to her heel controlled by the French; Austria compelled to forego all her Italian plans; Switzerland and Holland dominated by the First Consul's influence; Spain following submissively his imperious lead; England, despite all her naval triumphs, helpless on land; and France rapidly regaining more than all her old prestige and stability under the new institutions which form the most enduring tribute to the First Consul's glory.

CHAPTER XII

THE NEW INSTITUTIONS OF FRANCE

"WE have done with the romance of the Revolution: we must now commence its history. We must have eyes only for what is real and practicable in the application of principles, and not for the speculative and hypothetical." Such were the memorable words of Bonaparte to his Council of State at one of its early meetings. They strike the keynote of the era of the Consulate. It was a period of intensely practical activity that absorbed all the energies of France and caused the earlier events of the Revolution to fade away into a seemingly remote past. The failures of the civilian rulers and the military triumphs of Bonaparte had exerted a curious influence on the French character, which was in a mood of expectant receptivity. In 1800 everything was in the transitional state that favours the efforts of a master builder; and one was now at hand whose constructive ability in civil affairs equalled his transcendent genius for war.

I propose here briefly to review the most important works of reconstruction which render the Consulate and the early part of the Empire for ever famous. So vast and complex were Bonaparte's efforts in this field that they will be described, not chronologically, but subject by subject. The reader will, however, remember that for the most part they went on side by side, even amidst the distractions caused by war, diplomacy, colonial enterprises, and the myriad details of a vast administration. What here appears as a series of canals was in reality a mighty river of enterprise rolling in undivided volume

and fed by the superhuman vitality of the First Consul. It was his inexhaustible curiosity which compelled functionaries to reveal the secrets of their office: it was his intelligence that seized on the salient points of every problem and saw the solution: it was his ardour and mental tenacity which kept his Ministers and committees hard at work, and by toil of sometimes twenty hours a day supervised the results: it was, in fine, his passion for thoroughness, his ambition for France, that nerved every official with something of his own contempt of difficulties, until, as one of them said, "the gigantic entered into our very habits of thought."[1]

The first question of political reconstruction which urgently claimed attention was that of local government. On the very day when it was certain that the nation had accepted the new constitution, the First Consul presented to the Legislature a draft of a law for regulating the affairs of the Departments. It must be admitted that local self-government, as instituted by the men of 1789 in their Departmental System, had proved a failure. In that time of buoyant hope, when every difficulty and abuse seemed about to be charmed away by the magic of universal suffrage, local self-government of a most advanced type had been intrusted to an inexperienced populace. There were elections for the commune or parish, elections for the canton, elections for the district, elections for the Department, and elections for the National Assembly, until the rustic brain, after reeling with excitement, speedily fell back into muddled apathy and left affairs generally to the wire-pullers of the nearest Jacobin club. A time of great confusion ensued. Law went according to local opinion, and the national taxes were often left unpaid. In the Reign of Terror this lax system was replaced by the despotism of the secret com-

[1] Pasquier, "Mems.," vol. i., ch. ii., p. 299. So too Mollien, "Mems.": "With an insatiable activity in details, a restlessness of mind always eager for new cares, he not only reigned and governed, he continued to administer not only as Prime Minister, but more minutely than each Minister."

mittees, and the way was thus paved for a return to organized central control, such as was exercised by the Directory.

The First Consul, as successor to the Directory, therefore found matters ready to his hand for a drastic measure of centralization, and it is curious to notice that the men of 1789 had unwittingly cleared the ground for him. To make way for the "supremacy of the general will," they abolished the *Parlements*, which had maintained the old laws, customs, and privileges of their several provinces, and had frequently interfered in purely political matters. The abolition of these and other privileged corporations in 1789 unified France and left not a single barrier to withstand either the flood of democracy or the backwash of reaction. Everything therefore favoured the action of the First Consul in drawing all local powers under his own control. France was for the moment weary of elective bodies, that did little except waste the nation's taxes; and though there was some opposition to the new proposal, it passed on February 16th, 1800 (28 Pluviose, an, viii).

It substituted local government by the central power for local self-government. The local divisions remained the same, except that the "districts," abolished by the Convention, were now reconstituted on a somewhat larger scale, and were termed *arrondissements*, while the smaller communes, which had been merged in the cantons since 1795, were also revived. It is noteworthy that, of all the areas mapped out by the Constituent Assembly in 1789-90, only the Department and canton have had a continuous existence—a fact which seems to show the peril of tampering with well-established boundaries, and of carving out a large number of artificial districts, which speedily become the *corpus vile* of other experimenters. Indeed, so little was there of effective self-government that France seems to have sighed with relief when order was imposed by Bonaparte in the person of a Prefect. This important official, a miniature First Consul, was to administer the affairs

of the Department, while sub-prefects were similarly placed over the new *arrondissements*, and mayors over the communes. The mayors were appointed by the First Consul in communes of more than 5,000 souls: by the prefects in the smaller communes: all were alike responsible to the central power.

The rebound from the former electoral system, which placed all local authority ultimately in the hands of the voters, was emphasized by Article 75 of the constitution, which virtually raised officials beyond reach of prosecution. It ran thus: "The agents of the Government, other than the Ministers, cannot be prosecuted for facts relating to their duties except by a decision of the Council of State: in that case the prosecution takes place before the ordinary tribunals." Now, as this decision rested with a body composed almost entirely of the higher officials, it will be seen that the chance of a public prosecution of an official became extremely small. France was therefore in the first months of 1800 handed over to a hierarchy of officials closely bound together by interest and *esprit de corps;* and local administration, after ten years of democratic experiments, practically reverted to what it had been under the old monarchy. In fact, the powers of the Prefects were, on the whole, much greater than those of the royal Intendants: for while the latter were hampered by the provincial *Parlements*, the nominees of the First Consul had to deal with councils that retained scarce the shadow of power. The real authority in local matters rested with the Prefects. The old elective bodies survived, it is true, but their functions were now mainly advisory; and, lest their advice should be too copious, the sessions of the first two bodies were limited to a fortnight a year. Except for a share in the assessment of taxation, their existence was merely a screen to hide the reality of the new central despotism.[1] Beneficent it may

[1] Lack of space prevents any account of French finances and the establishment of the Bank of France. But we may note here that the collection of the national taxes was now carried out by a State-

have been; and the choice of Prefects was certainly a proof of Bonaparte's discernment of real merit among men of all shades of opinion; but for all that, it was a despotism, and one that has inextricably entwined itself with the whole life of France.[1]

It seems strange that this law should not have aroused fierce opposition; for it practically gagged democracy in its most appropriate and successful sphere of action, local self-government, and made popular election a mere shadow, except in the single act of the choice of the local *juges de paix*. This was foreseen by the Liberals in the Tribunate: but their power was small since the regulations passed in January: and though Daunou, as "reporter," sharply criticised this measure, yet he lamely concluded with the advice that it would be dangerous to reject it. The Tribunes therefore passed the proposal by 71 votes to 25: and the Corps Législatif by 217 to 68.

The results of this new local government have often been considered so favourable as to prove that the genius of the French people requires central control rather than self-government. But it should be noted that the conditions of France from 1790 to 1800 were altogether hostile to the development of free institutions. The fierce feuds at home, the greed and the class jealousies awakened by confiscation, the blasts of war and the blight of bankruptcy, would have severely tested the firmest of local institutions; they were certain to wither so delicate an organism as an absolute democracy, which requires peace, prosperity, and infinite patience for its development. Because France then came to despair of her local self-government, it did not follow that she would fail after Bonaparte's return had restored her prestige and prosperity. But the national

appointed director and his subordinates in every Department—a plan which yielded better results than former slipshod methods. The *conseil général* of the Department assessed the direct taxes among the smaller areas. "Méms." de Gaudin, Duc de Gaëte.

[1] Edmond Blanc, "Napoléon I; ses Institutions," p. 27.

élan forbade any postponement or compromise; and France forthwith accepted the rule of an able official hierarchy as a welcome alternative to the haphazard acts of local busybodies. By many able men the change has been hailed as a proof of Bonaparte's marvellous discernment of the national character, which, as they aver, longs for brilliance, order, and strong government, rather than for the steep and thorny paths of liberty. Certainly there is much in the modern history of France which supports this opinion. Yet perhaps these characteristics are due very largely to the master craftsman, who fashioned France anew when in a state of receptivity, and thus was able to subject democracy to that force which alone has been able to tame it—the mighty force of militarism.

The return to a monarchical policy was nowhere more evident than in the very important negotiations which regulated the relations of Church and State and produced the *Concordat* or treaty of peace with the Roman Catholic Church. But we must first look back at the events which had reduced the Roman Catholic Church in France to its pitiable condition.

The conduct of the revolutionists towards the Church of France was actuated partly by the urgent needs of the national exchequer, partly by hatred and fear of so powerful a religious corporation. Idealists of the new school of thought, and practical men who dreaded bankruptcy, accordingly joined in the assault on its property and privileges: its tithes were confiscated, the religious houses and their property were likewise absorbed, and its lands were declared to be the lands of the nation. A budget of public worship was, it is true, designed to support the bishops and priests; but this solemn obligation was soon renounced by the fiercer revolutionists. Yet robbery was not their worst offence. In July, 1790, they passed a law called the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, which aimed at subjecting the Church to the State. It compelled bishops and priests to seek election

by the adult males of their several Departments and parishes, and forced them to take a stringent oath of obedience to the new order of things. All the bishops but four refused to take an oath which set at naught the authority of the Pope: more than 50,000 priests likewise refused, and were ejected from their livings: the recusants were termed *orthodox* or *non-juring* priests, and by the law of August, 1792, they were exiled from France, while their more pliable or time-serving brethren who accepted the new decree were known as *constitutionals*. About 12,000 of the constitutionals married, while some of them applauded the extreme Jacobinical measures of the Terror. One of them shocked the faithful by celebrating the mysteries, having a *bonnet rouge* on his head, holding a pike in his hand, while his wife was installed near the altar.[1] Outrages like these were rare: but they served to discredit the constitutional Church and to throw up in sharper relief the courage with which the orthodox clergy met exile and death for conscience' sake. Moreover, the time-serving of the constitutionals was to avail them little: during the Terror their stipends were unpaid, and the churches were for the most part closed. After a partial respite in 1795-6, the *coup d'état* of Fructidor (1797) again ushered in two years of petty persecutions; but in the early summer of 1799 constitutionals were once more allowed to observe the Christian Sunday, and at the time of Bonaparte's return from Egypt their services were more frequented than those of the Theophilanthropists on the *décadis*. It was evident, then, that the anti-religious *furor* had burnt itself out, and that France was turning back to her old faith. Indeed, outside Paris and a few other large towns, public opinion mocked at the new cults, and in the country districts the peasantry clung with deep affection to their old orthodox priests, often following them into the forests to receive their services and forsaking those of their supplanters.

Such, then, was the religious state of France in 1799:—

[1] Theiner, "Hist. des deux Concordats," vol. i., p. 21.

her clergy were rent by a formidable schism; the orthodox priests clung where possible to their parishioners, or lived in destitution abroad; the constitutional priests, though still frowned on by the Directory, were gaining ground at the expense of the Theophilanthropists, whose expiring efforts excited ridicule. In fine, a nation weary of religious experiments and groping about for some firm anchorage in the midst of the turbid ebb-tide and its numerous backwaters.[1]

Despite the absence of any deep religious belief, Bonaparte felt the need of religion as the bulwark of morality and the cement of society. During his youth he had experienced the strength of Romanism in Corsica, and during his campaigns in Italy he saw with admiration the zeal of the French orthodox priests who had accepted exile and poverty for conscience' sake. To these outcasts he extended more protection than was deemed compatible with correct republicanism; and he received their grateful thanks. After Brumaire he suppressed the oath previously exacted from the clergy, and replaced it by a *promise* of fidelity to the constitution. Many reasons have been assigned for this conduct, but doubtless his imagination was touched by the sight of the majestic hierarchy of Rome, whose spiritual powers still prevailed, even amidst the ruin of its temporal authority, and were slowly but surely winning back the ground lost in the Revolution. An influence so impalpable yet irresistible, that inherited from the Rome of the Cæsars the gift of organization and the power of maintaining discipline, in which the Revolution was so signally lacking, might well be the ally of the man who now dominated the Latin peoples. The pupil of Cæsar could certainly not neglect the aid of the spiritual hierarchy, which was all that remained of the old Roman grandeur.

[1] Thibaudeau estimated that of the population of 35,000,000 the following assortment might be made: Protestants, Jews, and Theophilanthropists, 3,000,000; Catholics, 15,000,000, equally divided between orthodox and constitutionals; and as many as 17,000,000 professing no belief whatever.

Added to this was his keen instinct for reality, which led him to scorn such whipped-up creeds as Robespierre's Supreme Being and that amazing hybrid, Theophilanthropy, offspring of the Goddess of Reason and La Réveillière-Lépeaux. Having watched their manufacture, rise and fall, he felt the more regard for the faith of his youth, which satisfied one of the most imperious needs of his nature, a craving for certainty. Witness this crushing retort to M. Mathieu: "What is your Theophilanthropy? Oh, don't talk to me of a religion which only takes me for this life, without telling me whence I come or whither I go." Of course, this does not prove the reality of Napoleon's religion; but it shows that he was not devoid of the religious instinct.

The victory of Marengo enabled Bonaparte to proceed with his plans for an accommodation with the Vatican; and he informed one of the Lombard bishops that he desired to open friendly relations with Pope Pius VII., who was then about to make his entry into Rome. There he received the protection of the First Consul, and soon recovered his sovereignty over his States, excepting the Legations.

The negotiations between Paris and the Vatican were transacted chiefly by a very able priest, Bernier by name, who had gained the First Consul's confidence during the pacification of Brittany, and now urged on the envoys of Rome the need of deferring to all that was reasonable in the French demands. The negotiators for the Vatican were Cardinals Consalvi and Caprara, and Monseigneur Spina—able ecclesiastics, who were fitted to maintain clerical claims with that mixture of suppleness and firmness which had so often baffled the force and craft of mighty potentates. The first difficulty arose on the question of the resignation of bishops of the Gallican Church: Bonaparte demanded that, whether orthodox or constitutionals, they must resign their sees into the Pope's hands; failing that, they must be deposed by the papal authority. Sweeping as this proposal seemed, Bonaparte claimed that bishops of both sides must resign,

in order that a satisfactory selection might be made. Still more imperious was the need that the Church should renounce all claim to her confiscated domains. All classes of the community, so urged Bonaparte, had made immense sacrifices during the Revolution; and now that peasants were settled on these once clerical lands, the foundations of society would be broken up by any attempt to dispossess them.

To both of these proposals the Court of Rome offered a tenacious resistance. The idea of compelling long-persecuted bishops to resign their sees was no less distasteful than the latter proposal, which involved acquiescence in sacrilegious robbery. At least, pleaded Mgr. Spina, let tithes be re-established. To this request the First Consul deigned no reply. None, indeed, was possible except a curt refusal. Few imposts had been so detested as the tithe; and its reimposition would have wounded the peasant class, on which the First Consul based his authority. So long as he had their support he could treat with disdain the scoffs of the philosophers and even the opposition of his officers; but to have wavered on the subject of tithe and of the Church lands might have been fatal even to the victor of Marengo.[1]

In fact, the difficulty of effecting any compromise was enormous. In seeking to reconcile the France of Rousseau and Robespierre to the unchanging policy of the Vatican, the "heir to the Revolution" was essaying a harder task than any military enterprise. To slay men has ever been easier than to mould their thoughts anew; and Bonaparte was now striving not only to remould French thought but also to fashion anew the ideas of the Eternal City. He soon perceived that this latter enterprise was more difficult than the former. The Pope and his councillors rejoiced at the signs of his repentance, but required to see the fruits thereof. Instead of first-fruits they received unheard-of demands—the surrender of the three Lega-

[1] See Roederer, "Œuvres," vol. iii., p. 475. On the discontent of the officers, see Pasquier's "Mems.," vol. i., ch. vii.; also Marmont's "Mems.," bk. vi.

tions of Bologna, Ferrara, and Romagna, the renunciation of all tithes and Church lands in France, and the acceptance of a compromise with schismatics. What wonder that the replies from Rome were couched in the *non possumus* terms which form the last refuge of the Vatican. Finding that negotiations made no progress, Bonaparte intrusted Berthier and Murat to pay a visit to Rome and exercise a discreet but burdensome pressure in the form of requisitions for the French troops in the Papal States.

The ratification of peace with Austria gave greater weight to his representations at Rome, and he endeavoured to press on the signature of the Concordat, so as to startle the world by the simultaneous announcement of the pacification of the Continent and of the healing of the great religious schism in France. But the clerical machinery worked too slowly to admit of this projected *coup de théâtre*. In Bonaparte's proposals of February 25th, 1801, there were several demands already found to be inadmissible at the Vatican;[1] and matters came to a deadlock until the Pope invested Spina with larger powers for negotiating at Paris. Consalvi also proceeded to Paris, where he was received in state with other ambassadors at the Tuileries, the sight of a cardinal's robe causing no little sensation. The First Consul granted him a long interview, speaking at first somewhat seriously, but gradually becoming more affable and gracious. Yet as his behaviour softened his demands stiffened; and at the close of the audience he pressed Consalvi to sign a somewhat unfavourable version of the compact within five days, otherwise the negotiations would be at an end and a *national religion would be adopted*—an enterprise for which the auguries promised complete success. At a later interview he expressed the same resolution in homely phrase: when Consalvi pressed him to take a firm stand against the "constitutional" intruders, he laughingly remarked that he could do no more until he knew how he stood with Rome; for "you

[1] See the drafts in Count Boulay de la Meurthe's "Négociation du Concordat," vol. ii., pp. 58 and 268.

know that when one cannot arrange matters with God, one comes to terms with the devil."[1]

This dalliance with the "constitutionals" might have been more than an astute ruse, and Consalvi knew it. In framing a national Church the First Consul would have appealed not only to the old Gallican feeling, still strong among the clerics and laity, but also to the potent force of French nationality. The experiment might have been managed so as to offend none but the strictest Catholics, who were less to be feared than the free-thinkers. Consalvi was not far wrong when, writing of the official world at Paris, he said that only Bonaparte really desired a Concordat.

The First Consul's motives in seeking the alliance of Rome have, very naturally, been subjected to searching criticism; and in forcing the Concordat on France, and also on Rome, he was certainly undertaking the most difficult negotiation of his life.[2] But his preference for the Roman connection was an act of far-reaching statecraft. He saw that a national Church, unrecognized by Rome, was a mere half-way house between Romanism and Protestantism; and he disliked the latter creed because of its tendency to beget sects and to impair the validity of the general will. He still retained enough of Rousseau's doctrine to desire that the general will should be uniform, provided that it could be controlled by his own will. Such uniformity in the sphere of religion was impossible unless he had the support of the Papacy. Only by a bargain with Rome could he gain the support of a solid ecclesiastical phalanx. Finally, by erecting a French national Church, he would not only have perpetuated schism at home, but would have disqualified himself for acting the part of Charlemagne over central and southern Europe. To re-fashion Europe in a cosmopolitan mould he needed a clerical police that was more than merely French. To achieve those grander designs the successor of Cæsar would need the aid of the

[1] Theiner, vol. i., pp. 193 and 196.
[2] Méneval, "Mems.," vol. i., p. 81.

successor of Peter; and this aid would be granted only to the restorer of Roman Catholicism in France, never to the perpetuator of schism.

These would seem to be the chief reasons why he braved public opinion in Paris and clung to the Roman connection, bringing forward his plan of a Gallican Church only as a threatening move against the clerical flank. When the Vatican was obdurate he coquetted with the "constitutional" bishops, allowing them every facility for free speech in a council which they held at Paris at the close of June, 1801. He summoned to the Tuileries their president, the famous Grégoire, and showed him signal marks of esteem. "Put not your trust in princes" must soon have been the thought of Grégoire and his colleagues: for a fortnight later Bonaparte carried through his treaty with Rome and shelved alike the congress and the church of the "constitutionals."

It would be tedious to detail all the steps in this complex negotiation, but the final proceedings call for some notice. When the treaty was assuming its final form, Talleyrand, the polite scoffer, the bitter foe of all clerical claims, found it desirable to take the baths at a distant place, and left the threads of the negotiation in the hands of two men who were equally determined to prevent its signature, Maret, Secretary of State, and Hauterive, who afterwards become the official archivist of France. These men determined to submit to Consalvi a draft of the treaty differing widely from that which had been agreed upon; and that, too, when the official announcement had been made that the treaty was to be signed immediately. In the last hours the cardinal found himself confronted with unexpected conditions, many of which he had successfully repelled. Though staggered by this trickery, which compelled him to sign a surrender or to accept an open rupture, Consalvi fought the question over again in a conference that lasted twenty-four hours; he even appeared at the State dinner given on July 14th by the First Consul, who informed him before the other guests that it was a question of "my draft of the treaty or none

at all." Nothing baffled the patience and tenacity of the Cardinal; and finally, by the good offices of Joseph Bonaparte, the objectionable demands thrust forward at the eleventh hour were removed or altered.

The question has been discussed whether the First Consul was a party to this device. Theiner asserts that he knew nothing of it: that it was an official intrigue got up at the last moment by the anti-clericals so as to precipitate a rupture. In support of this view, he cites letters of Maret and Hauterive as inculpating these men and tending to free Bonaparte from suspicion of complicity. But the letters cannot be said to dissipate all suspicion. The First Consul had made this negotiation peculiarly his own: no officials assuredly would have dared secretly to foist their own version of an important treaty; or, if they did, this act would have been the last of their career. But Bonaparte did not disgrace them; on the contrary, he continued to honour them with his confidence. Moreover, the First Consul flew into a passion with his brother Joseph when he reported that Consalvi could not sign the document now offered to him, and tore in pieces the articles finally arranged with the Cardinal. On the return of his usually calm intelligence, he at last allowed the concessions to stand, with the exception of two; but in a scrutiny of motives we must assign most importance, not to second and more prudent thoughts, but to the first ebullition of feelings, which seem unmistakably to prove his knowledge and approval of Hauterive's device. We must therefore conclude that he allowed the antagonists of the Concordat to make this treacherous onset, with the intention of extorting every possible demand from the dazed and bewildered Cardinal.[1]

[1] Thiers omits any notice of this strange transaction. Lanfrey describes it, but unfortunately relies on the melodramatic version given in Consalvi's "Memoirs," which were written many years later and are far less trustworthy than the Cardinal's letters written at the time. In his careful review of all the documentary evidence, Count Boulay de la Meurthe (vol. iii., p. 201, note) concludes that the new project of the Concordat (No. VIII.) was drawn up by

After further delays the Concordat was ratified at Eastertide, 1802. It may be briefly described as follows: The French Government recognized that the Catholic apostolic and Roman religion was the religion of the great majority of the French people, "especially of the Consuls"; but it refused to declare it to be the religion of France, as was the case under the *ancien régime*. It was to be freely and publicly practised in France, subject to the police regulations that the Government judged necessary for the public tranquillity. In return for these great advantages, many concessions were expected from the Church. The present bishops, both orthodox and constitutional, were, at the Pope's invitation, to resign their sees; or, failing that, new appointments were to be made, as if the sees were vacant. The last proviso was necessary; for of the eighty-one surviving bishops affected by this decision as many as thirteen orthodox and two "constitutionals" offered persistent but unavailing protests against the action of the Pope and First Consul.

A new division of archbishoprics and bishoprics was now made, which gave in all sixty sees to France. The First Consul enjoyed the right of nomination to them, whereupon the Pope bestowed canonical investiture. The archbishops and bishops were all to take an oath of fidelity to the constitution. The bishops nominated the lower clerics provided that they were acceptable to the Government: all alike bound themselves to watch over governmental interests. The stability of France was further assured by a clause granting complete and permanent security to the holders of the confiscated Church lands—a healing and salutary compromise which restored peace to every village and soothed the qualms of many a troubled conscience. On its side, the State undertook to furnish suitable stipends to the clergy, a promise which

Hauterive, was "submitted immediately to the approbation of the First Consul," and thereupon formed the basis of the long and heated discussion of July 14th between the Papal and French plenipotentiaries. A facsimile of this interesting document, with all the erasures, is appended at the end of his volume.

was fulfilled in a rather niggardly spirit. For the rest, the First Consul enjoyed the same consideration as the Kings of France in all matters ecclesiastical ; and a clause was added, though Bonaparte declared it needless, that if any succeeding First Consul were not a Roman Catholic, his prerogatives in religious matters should be revised by a Convention. A similar Concordat was passed a little later for the pacification of the Cisalpine Republic.

The Concordat was bitterly assailed by the Jacobins, especially by the military chiefs, and had not the infidel generals been for the most part sundered by mutual jealousies they might perhaps have overthrown Bonaparte. But their obvious incapacity for civil affairs enabled them to venture on nothing more than a few coarse jests and clumsy demonstrations. At the Easter celebration at Notre Dame in honour of the ratification of the Concordat, one of them, Delmas by name, ventured on the only protest barbed with telling satire: "Yes, a fine piece of monkery this, indeed. It only lacked the million men who got killed to destroy what you are striving to bring back." But to all protests Bonaparte opposed a calm behaviour that veiled a rigid determination, before which priests and soldiers were alike helpless.

In subsequent articles styled "organic," Bonaparte, without consulting the Pope, made several laws that galled the orthodox clergy. Under the plea of legislating for the police of public worship, he reaffirmed some of the principles which he had been unable to incorporate in the Concordat itself. The organic articles asserted the old claims of the Gallican Church, which forbade the application of Papal Bulls, or of the decrees of "foreign" synods, to France: they further forbade the French bishops to assemble in council or synod without the permission of the Government; and this was also required for a bishop to leave his diocese, even if he were summoned to Rome. Such were the chief of the organic articles. Passed under the plea of securing public tranquillity, they proved a fruitful source of discord, which during the Empire became so acute as to weaken Napoleon's au-

thority. In matters religious as well as political, he early revealed his chief moral and mental defect, a determination to carry his point by whatever means and to require the utmost in every bargain. While refusing fully to establish Roman Catholicism as the religion of the State, he compelled the Church to surrender its temporalities, to accept the regulations of the State, and to protect its interests. Truly if, in Chateaubriand's famous phrase, he was the "restorer of the altars," he exacted the uttermost farthing for that restoration.

In one matter his clear intelligence stands forth in marked contrast to the narrow pedantry of the Roman Cardinals. At a time of reconciliation between orthodox and "constitutionals," they required from the latter a complete and public retractation of their recent errors. At once Bonaparte intervened with telling effect. So condign a humiliation, he argued, would altogether mar the harmony newly re-established. "The past is past: and the bishops and prefects ought to require from the priests only the declaration of adhesion to the Concordat, and of obedience to the bishop nominated by the First Consul and instituted by the Pope." This enlightened advice, backed up by irresistible power, carried the day, and some ten thousand constitutional priests were quietly received back into the Roman communion, those who had contracted marriages being compelled to put away their wives. Bonaparte took a deep interest in the reconstruction of dioceses, in the naming of churches, and similar details, doubtless with the full consciousness that the revival of the Roman religious discipline in France was a more important service than any feat of arms.

He was right: in healing a great schism in France he was dealing a deadly blow at the revolutionary feeling of which it was a prominent manifestation. In the words of one of his Ministers, "The Concordat was the most brilliant triumph over the genius of Revolution, and all the following successes have without exception resulted from it."[1] After this testimony it is needless to ask why

[1] Pasquier, "Mems.," vol. i., ch. vii. Two of the organic articles

Bonaparte did not take up with Protestantism. At St. Helena, it is true, he asserted that the choice of Catholicism or Protestantism was entirely open to him in 1801, and that the nation would have followed him in either direction: but his religious policy, if carefully examined, shows no sign of wavering on this subject, though he once or twice made a strategic diversion towards Geneva, when Rome showed too firm a front. Is it conceivable that a man who, as he informed Joseph, was systematically working to found a dynasty, should hesitate in the choice of a governmental creed? Is it possible to think of the great champion of external control and State discipline as a defender of liberty of conscience and the right of private judgment?

The regulation of the Protestant cult in France was a far less arduous task. But as Bonaparte's aim was to attach all cults to the State, he decided to recognize the two chief Protestant bodies in France, Calvinists and Lutherans, allowing them to choose their own pastors and to regulate their affairs in consistories. The pastors were to be salaried by the State, but in return the Government not only reserved its approval of every appointment, but required the Protestant bodies to have no relations whatever with any foreign Power or authority. The organic articles of 1802, which defined the position of the Protestant bodies, form a very important landmark in the history of the followers of Luther and Calvin. Persecuted by Louis XIV. and XV., they were tolerated by Louis XVI.; they gained complete religious equality

portended the abolition of the revolutionary calendar. The first restored the old names of the days of the week; the second ordered that Sunday should be the day of rest for all public functionaries. The observance of *décadis* thenceforth ceased; but the months of the revolutionary calendar were observed until the close of the year 1805. Theophilanthropy was similarly treated: when its votaries applied for a building, their request was refused on the ground that their cult came within the domain of philosophy, not of any actual religion! A small number of priests and of their parishioners refused to recognize the Concordat; and even to-day there are a few of these *anti-concordataires*.

in 1789, and after a few years of anarchy in matters of faith, they found themselves suddenly and stringently bound to the State by the organizing genius of Bonaparte.

In the years 1806-1808 the position of the Jews was likewise defined, at least for all those who recognized France as their country, performed all civic duties, and recognized all the laws of the State. In consideration of their paying full taxes and performing military service, they received official protection and their rabbis governmental support.

Such was Bonaparte's policy on religious subjects. There can be little doubt that its motive was, in the main, political. This methodizing genius, who looked on the beliefs and passions, the desires and ambitions of mankind, as so many forces which were to aid him in his ascent, had already satisfied the desires for military glory and material prosperity; and in his bargain with Rome he now won the support of an organized priesthood, besides that of the smaller Protestant and Jewish communions. That he gained also peace and quietness for France may be granted, though it was at the expense of that mental alertness and independence which had been her chief intellectual glory; but none of his intimate acquaintances ever doubted that his religion was only a vague sentiment, and his attendance at mass merely a compliment to his "sacred gendarmerie."[1]

Having dared and achieved the exploit of organizing religion in a half-infidel society, the First Consul was ready to undertake the almost equally hazardous task of establishing an order of social distinction, and that too in the very land where less than eight years previously every title qualified its holder for the guillotine. For his new experiment, the Legion of Honour, he could adduce only one precedent in the acts of the last twelve years.

[1] Chaptal, "Souvenirs," pp. 237-239. Lucien Bonaparte, "Mems.," vol. ii., p. 201, quotes his brother Joseph's opinion of the Concordat: "Un pas rétrograde et irréfléchi de la nation qui s'y soumettait."

The whole tendency had been towards levelling all inequalities. In 1790 all titles of nobility were swept away; and though the Convention decreed "arms of honour" to brave soldiers, yet its generosity to the deserving proved to be less remarkable than its activity in guillotining the unsuccessful. Bonaparte, however, adduced its custom of granting occasional modest rewards as a precedent for his own design, which was to be far more extended and ambitious.

In May, 1802, he proposed the formation of a Legion of Honour, organized in fifteen cohorts, with grand officers, commanders, officers, and legionaries. Its affairs were to be regulated by a council presided over by Bonaparte himself. Each cohort received "national domains" with 200,000 francs annual rental, and these funds were disbursed to the members on a scale proportionate to their rank. The men who had received "arms of honour" were, *ipso facto*, to be legionaries; soldiers "who had rendered considerable services to the State in the war of liberty," and civilians "who by their learning, talents, and virtues contributed to establish or to defend the principles of the Republic," might hope for the honour and reward now held out. The idea of rewarding merit in a civilian, as well as among the military caste which had hitherto almost entirely absorbed such honours, was certainly enlightened; and the names of the famous *savants* Laplace, Monge, Berthollet, Lagrange, Chaptal, and of jurists such as Treilhard and Tronchet, imparted lustre to what would otherwise have been a very commonplace institution. Bonaparte desired to call out all the faculties of the nation; and when Dumas proposed that the order should be limited to soldiers, the First Consul replied in a brilliant and convincing harangue:

"To do great things nowadays it is not enough to be a man of five feet ten inches. If strength and bravery made the general, every soldier might claim the command. The general who does great things is he who also possesses civil qualities. The soldier knows no law but force, sees nothing but it, and measures everything by it. The civilian, on the other hand,

only looks to the general welfare. The characteristic of the soldier is to wish to do everything despotically: that of the civilian is to submit everything to discussion, truth, and reason. The superiority thus unquestionably belongs to the civilian."

In these noble words we can discern the secret of Bonaparte's supremacy both in politics and in warfare. Uniting in his own person the ablest qualities of the statesman and the warrior, he naturally desired that his new order of merit should quicken the vitality of France in every direction, knowing full well that the results would speedily be felt in the army itself. When admitted to its ranks, the new member swore:

"To devote himself to the service of the Republic, to the maintenance of the integrity of its territory, the defence of its government, laws, and of the property which they have consecrated; to fight by all methods authorized by justice, reason, and law, against every attempt to re-establish the feudal *régime*, or to reproduce the titles and qualities thereto belonging; and finally to strive to the uttermost to maintain liberty and equality."

It is not surprising that the Tribunate, despite the recent purging of its most independent members, judged liberty and equality to be endangered by the method of defence now proposed. The members bitterly criticised the scheme as a device of the counter-revolution; but, with the timid inconsequence which was already sapping their virility, they proceeded to pass by fifty-six votes to thirty-eight a measure of which they had so accurately gauged the results. The new institution was, indeed, admirably suited to consolidate Bonaparte's power. Resting on the financial basis of the confiscated lands, it offered some guarantee against the restoration of the old monarchy and feudal nobility; while, by stimulating that love of distinction and brilliance which is inherent in every gifted people, it quietly began to graduate society and to group it around the Paladins of a new Gaulish chivalry. The people had recently cast off the overlordship of the old Frankish nobles, but admiration of merit (the ultimate

source of all titles of distinction) was only dormant even in the days of Robespierre; and its insane repression during the Terror now begat a corresponding enthusiasm for all commanding gifts. Of this inevitable reaction Bonaparte now made skilful use. When Berlier, one of the leading jurists of France, objected to the new order as leading France back to aristocracy, and contemptuously said that crosses and ribbons were the toys of monarchy, Bonaparte replied:

"Well: men are led by toys. I would not say that in a rostrum, but in a council of wise men and statesmen one ought to speak one's mind. I don't think that the French love liberty and equality: the French are not at all changed by ten years of revolution: they are what the Gauls were, fierce and fickle. They have one feeling—honour. We must nourish that feeling: they must have distinctions. See how they bow down before the stars of strangers." [1]

After so frank an exposition of motives to his own Council of State, little more need be said. We need not credit Bonaparte or the orators of the Tribunate with any superhuman sagacity when he and they foresaw that such an order would prepare the way for more resplendent titles. The Legion of Honour, at least in its highest grades, was the chrysalis stage of the Imperial *noblesse*. After all, the new Charlemagne might plead that his new creation satisfied an innate craving of the race, and that its durability was the best answer to hostile critics. Even when, in 1814, his Senators were offering the crown of France to the heir of the Bourbons, they expressly stipulated that the Legion of Honour should not be abolished: it has survived all the shocks of French history, even the vulgarizing associations of the Second Empire.

The same quality of almost pyramidal solidity characterizes another great enterprise of the Napoleonic period, the codification of French law.

The difficulties of this undertaking consisted mainly

[1] Thibaudeau, "Consulat," ch. xxvi.

in the enormous mass of decrees emanating from the National Assemblies, relative to political, civil, and criminal affairs. Many of those decrees, the offspring of a momentary enthusiasm, had found a place in the codes of laws which were then compiled; and yet sagacious observers knew that several of them warred against the instincts of the Gallic race. This conviction was summed up in the trenchant statement of the compilers of the new code, in which they appealed from the ideas of Rousseau to the customs of the past: "New theories are but the maxims of certain individuals: the old maxims represent the sense of centuries." There was much force in this dictum. The overthrow of Feudalism and the old monarchy had not permanently altered the French nature. They were still the same joyous, artistic, clan-loving people whom the Latin historians described: and pride in the nation or the family was as closely linked with respect for a doughty champion of national and family interests as in the days of Cæsar. Of this Roman or quasi-Gallic reaction Napoleon was to be the regulator; and no sphere of his activities bespeaks his unerring political sagacity more than his sifting of the old and the new in the great code which was afterwards to bear his name.

Old French law had been an inextricable labyrinth of laws and customs, mainly Roman and Frankish in origin, hopelessly tangled by feudal customs, provincial privileges, ecclesiastical rights, and the later undergrowth of royal decrees; and no part of the legislation of the revolutionists met with so little resistance as their root and branch destruction of this exasperating jungle. Their difficulties only began when they endeavoured to apply the principles of the Rights of Man to political, civil, and criminal affairs. The chief of these principles relating to criminal law were that law can only forbid actions that are harmful to society, and must only impose penalties that are strictly necessary. To these epoch-making pronouncements the Assembly added, in 1790, that crimes should be visited only on the guilty individual, not on the family; and that

penalties must be proportioned to the offences. The last two of these principles had of late been flagrantly violated; but the general pacification of France now permitted a calm consideration of the whole question of criminal law, and of its application to normal conditions.

Civil law was to be greatly influenced by the Rights of Man; but those famous declarations were to a large extent contravened in the ensuing civil strifes, and their application to real life was rendered infinitely more difficult by that predominance of the critical over the constructive faculties which marred the efforts of the revolutionary Babel-builders. Indeed, such was the ardour of those enthusiasts that they could scarcely see any difficulties. Thus, the Convention in 1793 allowed its legislative committee just one month for the preparation of a code of civil law. At the close of six weeks Cambacérès, the reporter of the committee, was actually able to announce that it was ready. It was found to be too complex. Another commission was ordered to reconstruct it: this time the Convention discovered that the revised edition was too concise. Two other drafts were drawn up at the orders of the Directory, but neither gave satisfaction. And thus it was reserved for the First Consul to achieve what the revolutionists had only begun, building on the foundations and with the very materials which their ten years' toil had prepared.

He had many other advantages. The Second Consul, Cambacérès, was at his side, with stores of legal experience and habits of complaisance that were of the highest value. Then, too, the principles of personal liberty and social equality were yielding ground before the more autocratic maxims of Roman law. The view of life now dominant was that of the warrior not of the philosopher. Bonaparte named Tronchet, Bigot de Préameneu, and the eloquent and learned Portalis for the redaction of the code. By ceaseless toil they completed their first draft in four months. Then, after receiving the criticisms of the Court of Cassation and the Tribunals of Appeal, it came before the Council of State for the decision of

its special committee on legislation. There it was subjected to the scrutiny of several experts, but, above all, to Bonaparte himself. He presided at more than half of the 102 sittings devoted to this criticism; and sittings of eight or nine hours were scarcely long enough to satisfy his eager curiosity, his relentless activity, and his determined practicality.

From the notes of Thibaudeau one of the members of this revising committee, we catch a glimpse of the part there played by the First Consul. We see him listening intently to the discussions of the jurists, taking up and sorting the threads of thought when a tangle seemed imminent, and presenting the result in some striking pattern. We watch his methodizing spirit at work on the cumbrous legal phraseology, hammering it out into clear, ductile French. We feel the unerring sagacity, which acted as a political and social touchstone, testing, approving, or rejecting multifarious details drawn from old French law or from the customs of the Revolution; and finally we wonder at the architectural skill which worked the 2,281 articles of the Code into an almost unassailable pile. To the skill and patience of the three chief redactors that result is, of course, very largely due: yet, in its mingling of strength, simplicity, and symmetry, we may discern the projection of Napoleon's genius over what had hitherto been a legal chaos.

Some blocks of the pyramid were almost entirely his own. He widened the area of French citizenship; above all, he strengthened the structure of the family by enhancing the father's authority. Herein his Corsican instincts and the requirements of statecraft led him to undo much of the legislation of the revolutionists. Their ideal was individual liberty: his aim was to establish public order by autocratic methods. They had sought to make of the family a little republic, founded on the principles of liberty and equality; but in the new code the paternal authority reappeared no less strict, albeit less severe in some details than that of the *ancien régime*. The family was thenceforth modelled on the idea domin-

ant in the State, that authority and responsible action pertained to a single individual. The father controlled the conduct of his children: his consent was necessary for the marriage of sons up to their twenty-fifth year, for that of daughters up to their twenty-first year; and other regulations were framed in the same spirit.[1] Thus there was rebuilt in France the institution of the family on an almost Roman basis; and these customs, contrasting sharply with the domestic anarchy of the Anglo-Saxon race, have had a mighty influence in fashioning the character of the French, as of the other Latin peoples, to a ductility that yields a ready obedience to local officials, drill-sergeants, and the central Government.

In other respects Bonaparte's influence on the code was equally potent. He raised the age at which marriage could be legally contracted to that of eighteen for men, and fifteen for women, and he prescribed a formula of obedience to be repeated by the bride to her husband; while the latter was bound to protect and support the wife.[2]

And yet, on the question of divorce, Bonaparte's action was sufficiently ambiguous to reawaken Josephine's fears; and the detractors of the great man have some ground for declaring that his action herein was dictated by personal considerations. Others again may point to the declarations of the French National Assemblies that

[1] "Code Napoléon," art. 148.

[2] In other respects also Bonaparte's influence was used to depress the legal status of woman, which the men of 1789 had done so much to raise. In his curious letter of May 15th, 1807, on the Institution at Ecouen, we have his ideas on a sound, useful education for girls: ". . . We must begin with religion in all its severity. Do not admit any modification of this. Religion is very important in a girls' public school: it is the surest guarantee for mothers and husbands. We must train up believers, not reasoners. The weakness of women's brains, the unsteadiness of their ideas, their function in the social order, their need of constant resignation and of a kind of indulgent and easy charity—all can only be attained by religion." They were to learn a little geography and history, but no foreign language; above all, to do plenty of needlework.

the law regarded marriage merely as a civil contract, and that divorce was to be a logical sequel of individual liberty, "which an indissoluble tie would annul." It is indisputable that extremely lax customs had been the result of the law of 1792, divorce being allowed on a mere declaration of incompatibility of temper.[1] Against these scandals Bonaparte firmly set his face. But he disagreed with the framers of the new Code when they proposed altogether to prohibit divorce, though such a proposition might well have seemed consonant with his zeal for Roman Catholicism. After long debates it was decided to reduce the causes which could render divorce possible from nine to four—adultery, cruelty, condemnation to a degrading penalty, and mutual consent—provided that this last demand should be persistently urged after not less than two years of marriage, and in no case was it to be valid after twenty years of marriage.[2]

We may also notice here that Bonaparte sought to surround the act of adoption with much solemnity, declaring it to be one of the grandest acts imaginable. Yet, lest marriage should thereby be discouraged, celibates were expressly debarred from the privileges of adopting heirs. The precaution shows how keenly this able ruler peered into the future. Doubtless, he surmised that in the future the population of France would cease to expand at the normal rate, owing to the working of the law compelling the equal division of property among all the children of a family. To this law he was certainly opposed. Equality in regard to the bequest of property was one of the sacred maxims of revolutionary jurists, who had limited the right of free disposal by bequest to one-tenth of each estate: nine-tenths being of necessity divided equally among the direct heirs. Yet so strong was the reaction in favour of the Roman principle of paternal authority, that Bonaparte and a majority of the drafters of the new Code scrupled not to assail that maxim, and to claim for the father larger discretionary

[1] Sagnac, "Législation civile de la Rév. Fr.," p. 293.

[2] Divorce was suppressed in 1816, but was re-established in 1884.

powers over the disposal of his property. They demanded that the disposable share should vary according to the wealth of the testator—a remarkable proposal, which proves him to be anything but the unflinching champion of revolutionary legal ideas which popular French histories have generally depicted him.

This proposal would have re-established liberty of bequest in its most pernicious form, granting almost limitless discretionary power to the wealthy, while restricting or denying it to the poor.[1] Fortunately for his reputation in France, the suggestion was rejected; and the law, as finally adopted, fixed the disposable share as one-half of the property, if there was but one heir; one-third, if there were two heirs; one-fourth, if there were three; and so on, diminishing as the size of the family increased. This sliding scale, varying inversely with the size of the family, is open to an obvious objection: it granted liberty of bequest only in cases where the family was small, but practically lapsed when the family attained to patriarchal dimensions. The natural result has been that the birth-rate has suffered a serious and prolonged check in France. It seems certain that the First Consul foresaw this result. His experience of peasant life must have warned him that the law, even as now amended, would stunt the population of France and ultimately bring about that ὀλιγανθρωπία which saps all great military enterprises. The great captain did all in his power to prevent the French settling down in a self-contained national life; he strove to stir them up to world-wide undertakings, and for the success of his future imperial schemes a redundant population was an absolute necessity.

The Civil Code became law in 1804: after undergoing some slight modifications and additions, it was, in 1807 renamed the Code Napoléon. Its provisions had already, in 1806, been adopted in Italy. In 1810 Holland, and the newly-annexed coast-line of the North Sea as far as Hamburg, and even Lübeck on the Baltic,

[1] Sagnac, *op. cit.*, p. 352.

received it as the basis of their laws, as did the Grand Duchy of Berg in 1811. Indirectly it has also exerted an immense influence on the legislation of Central and Southern Germany, Prussia, Switzerland, and Spain: while many of the Central and South American States have also borrowed its salient features.

A Code of Civil Procedure was promulgated in France in 1806, one of Commerce in 1807, of "Criminal Instruction" in 1808, and a Penal Code in 1810. Except that they were more reactionary in spirit than the Civil Code, there is little that calls for notice here, the Penal Code especially showing little advance in intelligence or clemency on the older laws of France. Even in 1802, officials favoured severity after the disorders of the preceding years. When Fox and Romilly paid a visit to Talleyrand at Paris, they were informed by his secretary that:

"In his opinion nothing could restore good morals and order in the country but 'la roue et la réligion de nos ancêtres.' He knew, he said, that the English did not think so, but we knew nothing of the people. Fox was deeply shocked at the idea of restoring the wheel as a punishment in France."[1]

This horrible punishment was not actually restored: but this extract from Romilly's diary shows what was the state of feeling in official circles at Paris, and how strong was the reaction towards older ideas. The reaction was unquestionably emphasized by Bonaparte's influence, and it is noteworthy that the Penal and other Codes, passed during the Empire, were more reactionary than the laws of the Consulate. Yet, even as First Consul, he exerted an influence that began to banish the customs and traditions of the Revolution, except in the single sphere of material interests; and he satisfied the peasants' love of land and money in order that he might the more securely triumph over revolutionary ideals and draw France insensibly back to the age of Louis XIV.

[1] "The Life of Sir S. Romilly," vol. i., p. 408.

While the legislator must always keep in reserve punishment as the *ultima ratio* for the lawless, he will turn by preference to education as a more potent moralizing agency; and certainly education urgently needed Bonaparte's attention. The work of carrying into practice the grand educational aims of Condorcet and his coadjutors in the French Convention was enough to tax the energies of a Hercules. Those ardent reformers did little more than clear the ground for future action: they abolished the old monastic and clerical training, and declared for a generous system of national education in primary, secondary, and advanced schools. But amid strifes and bankruptcy their aims remained unfulfilled. In 1799 there were only twenty-four elementary schools open in Paris, with a total attendance of less than 1,000 pupils; and in rural districts matters were equally bad. Indeed, Lucien Bonaparte asserted that scarcely any education was to be found in France. Exaggerated though this statement was, in relation to secondary and advanced education, it was proximately true of the elementary schools. The revolutionists had merely traced the outlines of a scheme: it remained for the First Consul to fill in the details, or to leave it blank.

The result can scarcely be cited as a proof of his educational zeal. Elementary schools were left to the control and supervision of the communes and of the *sous-préfets*, and naturally made little advance amidst an apathetic population and under officials who cared not to press on an expensive enterprise. The law of April 30th, 1802, however, aimed at improving the secondary education, which the Convention had attempted to give in its *écoles centrales*. These were now reconstituted either as *écoles secondaires* or as *lycées*. The former were local or even private institutions intended for the most promising pupils of the commune or group of communes; while the *lycées*, far fewer in number, were controlled directly by the Government. In both of these schools great prominence was given to the exact and applied sciences. The aim of the instruction was not to awaken thought and

develop the faculties, but rather to fashion able bread-winners, obedient citizens, and enthusiastic soldiers. The training was of an almost military type, the pupils being regularly drilled, while the lessons began and ended with the roll of drums. The numbers of the *lycées* and of their pupils rapidly increased; but the progress of the secondary and primary schools, which could boast no such attractions, was very slow. In 1806 only 25,000 children were attending the public primary schools. But two years later elementary and advanced instruction received a notable impetus from the establishment of the University of France.

There is no institution which better reveals the character of the French Emperor, with its singular combination of greatness and littleness, of wide-sweeping aims with official pedantry. The University, as it existed during the First Empire, offers a striking example of that mania for the control of the general will which philosophers had so attractively taught and Napoleon so profitably practised. It is the first definite outcome of a desire to subject education and learning to wholesale regimental methods, and to break up the old-world bowers of culture by State-worked steam-ploughs. His aims were thus set forth:

"I want a teaching body, because such a body never dies, but transmits its organization and spirit. I want a body whose teaching is far above the fads of the moment, goes straight on even when the government is asleep, and whose administration and statutes become so national that one can never lightly resolve to meddle with them. . . . There will never be fixity in politics if there is not a teaching body with fixed principles. As long as people do not from their infancy learn whether they ought to be republicans or monarchists, Catholics or sceptics, the State will never form a nation: it will rest on unsafe and shifting foundations, always exposed to changes and disorders."

Such being Napoleon's designs, the new University of France was admirably suited to his purpose. It was not a local university: it was the sum total of all the public

teaching bodies of the French Empire, arranged and drilled in one vast instructional array. Elementary schools, secondary schools, *lycées*, as well as the more advanced colleges, all were absorbed in and controlled by this great teaching corporation, which was to inculcate the precepts of the Catholic religion, fidelity to the Emperor and to his Government, as guarantees for the welfare of the people and the unity of France. For educational purposes, France was now divided into seventeen Academies, which formed the local centres of the new institution. Thus, from Paris and sixteen provincial Academies, instruction was strictly organized and controlled; and within a short time of its institution (March, 1808), instruction of all kinds, including that of the elementary schools, showed some advance. But to all those who look on the unfolding of the mental and moral faculties as the chief aim of true *education*, the homely experiments of Pestalozzi offer a far more suggestive and important field for observation than the barrack-like methods of the French Emperor. The Swiss reformer sought to train the mind to observe, reflect, and think; to assist the faculties in attaining their fullest and freest expression; and thus to add to the richness and variety of human thought. The French imperial system sought to prune away all mental independence, and to train the young generation in neat and serviceable *espalier* methods: all aspiring shoots, especially in the sphere of moral and political science, were sharply cut down. Consequently French thought, which had been the most ardently speculative in Europe, speedily became vapid and mechanical.

The same remark is proximately true of the literary life of the First Empire. It soon began to feel the rigorous methods of the Emperor. Poetry and all other modes of expression of lofty thought and rapt feeling require not only a free outlet but natural and unrestrained surroundings. The true poet is at home in the forest or on the mountain rather than in prim *parterres*. The philosopher sees most clearly and reasons most sug-

gestively, when his faculties are not cramped by the need of observing political rules and police regulations. And the historian, when he is tied down to a mere investigation and recital of facts, without reference to their meaning, is but a sorry fowl flapping helplessly with unequal wings.

Yet such were the conditions under which the literature of France struggled and pined. Her poets, a band sadly thinned already by the guillotine, sang in forced and hollow strains until the return of royalism begat an imperialist fervour in the soul-stirring lyrics of Béranger: her philosophy was dumb; and Napoleonic history limped along on official crutches, until Thiers, a generation later, essayed his monumental work. In the realm of exact and applied science, as might be expected, splendid discoveries adorned the Emperor's reign; but if we are to find any vitality in the literature of that period, we must go to the ranks, not of the panegyrists, but of the opposition. There, in the pages of Madame de Staël and Chateaubriand, we feel the throb of life. Genius will out, of its own native force: but it cannot be pressed out, even at a Napoleon's bidding. In vain did he endeavour to stimulate literature by the reorganization of the Institute, and by granting decennial prizes for the chief works and discoveries of the decade. While science prospered, literature languished: and one of his own remarks, as to the desirability of a public and semi-official criticism of some great literary work, seems to suggest a reason for this intellectual malaise:

"The public will take interest in this criticism; perhaps it will even take sides: it matters not, as its attention will be fixed on these interesting debates: it will talk about grammar and poetry: taste will be improved, and our aim will be fulfilled: *out of that will come poets and grammarians.*"

And so it came to pass that, while he was rescuing a nation from chaos and his eagles winged their flight to Naples, Lisbon, and Moscow, he found no original thinker worthily to hymn his praises; and the chief literary triumphs of

his reign came from Chateaubriand, whom he impoverished, and Madame de Staël, whom he drove into exile.

Such are the chief laws and customs which are imperishably associated with the name of Napoleon Bonaparte. In some respects they may be described as making for progress. Their establishment gave to the Revolution that solidity which it had previously lacked. Among so "inflammable" a people as the French—the epithet is Ste. Beuve's—it was quite possible that some of the chief civil conquests of the last decade might have been lost, had not the First Consul, to use his own expressive phrase, "thrown in some blocks of granite." We may intensify his metaphor and assert that out of the shifting shingle of French life he constructed a concrete breakwater, in which his own will acted as the binding cement, defying the storms of revolutionary or royalist passion which had swept the incoherent atoms to and fro, and had carried desolation far inland. Thenceforth France was able to work out her future under the shelter of institutions which unquestionably possess one supreme merit, that of durability. But while the chief civic and material gains of the Revolution were thus perpetuated, the very spirit and life of that great movement were benumbed by the personality and action of Napoleon. The burning enthusiasm for the Rights of Man was quenched, the passion for civic equality survived only as the gibbering ghost of what it had been in 1790, and the consolidation of revolutionary France was effected by a process nearly akin to petrifaction.

And yet this time of political and intellectual reaction in France was marked by the rise of the greatest of her modern institutions. There is the chief paradox of that age. While barren of literary activity and of truly civic developments, yet it was unequalled in the growth of institutions. This is generally the characteristic of epochs when the human faculties, long congealed by untoward restraints, suddenly burst their barriers and run riot in a spring-tide of hope. The time of disillusionment or

despair which usually supervenes may, as a rule, be compared with the numbing torpor of winter, necessary doubtless in our human economy, but lacking the charm and vitality of the expansive phase. Often, indeed, it is disgraced by the characteristics of a slavish populace, a mean selfishness, a mad frivolity, and fawning adulation on the ruler who dispenses *panem et circenses*. Such has been the course of many a political reaction, from the time of degenerate Athens and imperial Rome down to the decay of Medicean Florence and the orgies of the restored Stuarts.

The fruitfulness of the time of monarchical reaction in France may be chiefly attributed to two causes, the one general, the other personal; the one connected with the French Revolution, the other with the exceptional gifts of Bonaparte. In their efforts to create durable institutions the revolutionists had failed: they had attempted too much: they had overthrown the old order, had undertaken crusades against monarchical Europe, and striven to manufacture constitutions and remodel a deeply agitated society. They did scarcely more than trace the outlines of the future social structure. The edifice, which should have been reared by the Directory, was scarcely advanced at all, owing to the singular dullness of the new rulers of France. But the genius was at hand. He restored order, he rallied various classes to his side, he methodized local government, he restored finance and credit, he restored religious peace and yet secured the peasants in their tenure of the confiscated lands, he rewarded merit with social honours, and finally he solidified his polity by a comprehensive code of laws which made him the keystone of the now rounded arch of French life.

His methods in this immense work deserve attention: they were very different from those of the revolutionary parties after the best days of 1789 were past. The followers of Rousseau worked on rigorous *a priori* methods. If institutions and sentiments did not square with the principles of their master, they were swept away or were forced into conformity with the new evangel. A

correct knowledge of the "Contrat Social" and keen critical powers were the prime requisites of Jacobinical statesmanship. Knowledge of the history of France, the faculty of gauging the real strength of popular feelings, tact in conciliating important interests, all were alike despised. Institutions and class interests were as nothing in comparison with that imposing abstraction, the general will. For this alone could philosophers legislate and factions conspire.

From these lofty aims and exasperating methods Bonaparte was speedily weaned. If victorious analysis led to this; if it could only pull down, not reconstruct; if, while legislating for the general will, Jacobins harassed one class after another and produced civil war, then away with their pedantries in favour of the practical statecraft which attempted one task at a time and aimed at winning back in turn the alienated classes. Then, and then alone, after civic peace had been re-established, would he attempt the reconstruction of the civil order in the same tentative manner, taking up only this or that frayed end at once, trusting to time, skill, and patience to transform the tangle into a symmetrical pattern. And thus, where Feuillants, Girondins, and Jacobins had produced chaos, the practical man and his able helpers succeeded in weaving ineffaceable outlines. As to the time when the change took place in Bonaparte's brain from Jacobinism to aims and methods that may be called conservative, we are strangely ignorant. But the results of this mental change will stand forth clear and solid for many a generation in the customs, laws, and institutions of his adopted country. If the Revolution, intellectually considered, began and ended with analysis, Napoleon's faculties supplied the needed synthesis. Together they made modern France.

CHAPTER XIII

THE CONSULATE FOR LIFE

WITH the view of presenting in clear outlines the chief institutions of Napoleonic France, they have been described in the preceding chapter, detached from their political setting. We now return to consider the events which favoured the consolidation of Bonaparte's power.

No politician inured to the tricks of statecraft could more firmly have handled public affairs than the man who practically began his political apprenticeship at Brumaire. Without apparent effort he rose to the height whence the five Directors had so ignominiously fallen; and instinctively he chose at once the policy which alone could have insured rest for France, that of balancing interests and parties. His own political views being as yet unknown, dark with the excessive brightness of his encircling glory, he could pose as the conciliator of contending factions. The Jacobins were content when they saw the regicide Cambacérès become Second Consul; and friends of constitutional monarchy remembered that the Third Consul, Lebrun, had leanings towards the Feuillants of 1791. Fouché at the inquisitorial Ministry of Police, and Merlin, Berlier, Réal, and Boulay de la Meurthe in the Council of State seemed a barrier to all monarchical schemes; and the Jacobins therefore remained quiet, even while Catholic worship was again publicly celebrated, while Vendean rebels were pardoned, and plotting *émigrés* were entering the public service.

Many, indeed, of the prominent terrorists had settled profitably on the offices which Bonaparte had multiplied

throughout France, and were therefore dumb: but some of the less favoured ones, angered by the stealthy advance of autocracy, wove a plot for the overthrow of the First Consul. Chief among them were a braggart named Demerville, a painter, Topino Lebrun, a sculptor, Ceracchi, and Aréna, brother of the Corsican deputy who had shaken Bonaparte by the collar at the crisis of Brumaire. These men hit upon the notion that, with the aid of one man of action, they could make away with the new despot. They opened their hearts to a penniless officer named Harel, who had been dismissed from the army; and he straightway took the news to Bonaparte's private secretary, Bourrienne. The First Consul, on hearing of the matter, at once charged Bourrienne to supply Harel with money to buy firearms, but not to tell the secret to Fouché, of whose double dealings with the Jacobins he was already aware. It became needful, however, to inform him of the plot, which was now carefully nursed by the authorities. The arrests were planned to take place at the opera on October 10th. About half an hour after the play had begun, Bonaparte bade his secretary go into the lobby to hear the news. Bourrienne at once heard the noise caused by a number of arrests: he came back, reported the matter to his master, who forthwith returned to the Tuileries. The plot was over.[1]

A more serious attempt was to follow. On the 3rd day of Nivôse (December 24th, 1800), as the First

[1] Madelin in his "Fouché," ch. xi., shows how Bonaparte's private police managed the affair. Harel was afterwards promoted to the governorship of the Castle of Vincennes: the four talkers, whom he and the police had lured on, were executed after the affair of Nivôse. That dextrous literary flatterer, the poet Fontanes, celebrated the "discovery" of the Aréna plot by publishing anonymously a pamphlet ("A Parallel between Cæsar, Cromwell, Monk, and Bonaparte") in which he decided that no one but Cæsar deserved the honour of a comparison with Bonaparte, and that certain destinies were summoning him to a yet higher title. The pamphlet appeared under the patronage of Lucien Bonaparte, and so annoyed his brother that he soon despatched him on a diplomatic mission to Madrid as a punishment for his ill-timed suggestions.

Consul was driving to the opera to hear Haydn's oratorio, "The Creation," his carriage was shaken by a terrific explosion. A bomb had burst between his carriage and that of Josephine, which was following. Neither was injured, though many spectators were killed or wounded. "Josephine," he calmly said, as she entered the box, "those rascals wanted to blow me up: send for a copy of the music." But under this cool demeanour he nursed a determination of vengeance against his political foes, the Jacobins. On the next day he appeared at a session of the Council of State along with the Ministers of Police and of the Interior, Fouché and Chaptal. The Aréna plot and other recent events seemed to point to wild Jacobins and anarchists as the authors of this outrage: but Fouché ventured to impute it to the royalists and to England.

"There are in it," Bonaparte at once remarked, "neither nobles, nor Chouans, nor priests. They are men of September (*Septembriseurs*), wretches stained with blood, ever conspiring in solid phalanx against every successive government. We must find a means of prompt redress."

The Councillors at once adopted this opinion, Roederer hotly declaring his open hostility to Fouché for his reputed complicity with the terrorists; and, if we may credit the *on dit* of Pasquier, Talleyrand urged the execution of Fouché within twenty-four hours. Bonaparte, however, preferred to keep the two cleverest and most questionable schemers of the age, so as mutually to check each other's movements. A day later, when the Council was about to institute special proceedings, Bonaparte again intervened with the remark that the action of the tribunal would be too slow, too restricted: a signal revenge was needed for so foul a crime, rapid as lightning:

"Blood must be shed: as many guilty must be shot as the innocent who had perished—some fifteen or twenty—and two hundred banished, so that the Republic might profit by that event to purge itself."

This was the policy now openly followed. In vain did some members of the usually obsequious Council object to this summary procedure. Roederer, Boulay, even the Second Consul himself, now perceived how trifling was their influence when they attempted to modify Bonaparte's plans, and two sections of the Council speedily decided that there should be a military commission to judge suspects and "deport" dangerous persons, and that the Government should announce this to the Senate, Corps Législatif, and Tribunate. Public opinion, meanwhile, was carefully trained by the official "Moniteur," which described in detail various so-called anarchist attempts; but an increasing number in official circles veered round to Fouché's belief that the outrage was the work of the royalists abetted by England. The First Consul himself, six days after the event, inclined to this version. Nevertheless, at a full meeting of the Council of State, on the first day of the year 1801, he brought up a list of "130 villains who were troubling the public peace," with a view to inflicting summary punishment on them. Thibaudeau, Boulay, and Roederer haltingly expressed their fears that all the 130 might not be guilty of the recent outrage, and that the Council had no powers to decide on the proscription of individuals. Bonaparte at once assured them that he was not consulting them about the fate of individuals, but merely to know whether they thought an exceptional measure necessary. The Government had only

"Strong presumptions, not proofs, that the terrorists were the authors of this attempt. *Chouannerie* and emigration are surface ills, terrorism is an internal disease. The measure ought to be taken independently of the event. It is only the occasion of it. We banish them (the terrorists) for the massacres of September 2nd, May 31st, the Babeuf plot, and every subsequent attempt."[1]

The Council thereupon unanimously affirmed the need of an exceptional measure, and adopted a suggestion of

[1] Thibaudeau, *op. cit.*, vol. ii., p. 55. Miot de Melito, ch. xii.

Talleyrand (probably emanating from Bonaparte) that the Senate should be invited to declare by a special decision, called a *senatus consultum*, whether such an act were "preservative of the constitution." This device, which avoided the necessity of passing a law through two less subservient bodies, the Tribunate and Corps Législatif, was forthwith approved by the guardians of the constitution. It had far-reaching results. The complaisant Senate was brought down from its constitutional watch-tower to become the tool of the Consuls; and an easy way for further innovations was thus dextrously opened up through the very portals which were designed to bar them out.

The immediate results of the device were startling. By an act of January 4th, 1801, as many as 130 prominent Jacobins were "placed under special surveillance outside the European territory of the Republic"—a specious phrase for denoting a living death amidst the wastes of French Guiana or the Seychelles. Some of the threatened persons escaped, perhaps owing to the connivance of Fouché; some were sent to the Isle of Oléron; but the others were forthwith despatched to the miseries of captivity in the tropics. Among these were personages so diverse as Rossignol, once the scourge of France with his force of Parisian cut-throats, and Dustrem, whose crime was his vehement upbraiding of Bonaparte at St. Cloud. After this measure had taken effect, it was discovered by judicial inquiry that the Jacobins had no connection with the outrage, which was the work of royalists named Saint-Réjant and Carbon. These were captured, and on January 31st, 1801, were executed; but their fate had no influence whatever on the sentence of the transported Jacobins. Of those who were sent to Guiana and the Seychelles, scarce twenty saw France again.[1]

[1] It seems clear, from the evidence so frankly given by Cadoudal in his trial in 1804, as well as from his expressions when he heard of the affair of Nivôse, that the hero of the Chouans had no part in the bomb affair. He had returned to France, had empowered St. Réjant to buy arms and horses, "dont je me servirai plus tard";

Bonaparte's conduct with respect to plots deserves close attention. Never since the age of the Borgias have conspiracies been so skilfully exploited, so cunningly countermined. Moreover, his conduct with respect to the Aréna and Nivôse affairs had a wider significance; for he now quietly but firmly exchanged the policy of balancing parties for one which crushed the extreme republicans, and enhanced the importance of all who were likely to approve or condone the establishment of personal rule.

It is now time to consider the effect which Bonaparte's foreign policy had on his position in France. Reserving for a later chapter an examination of the Treaty of Amiens, we may here notice the close connection between Bonaparte's diplomatic successes and the perpetuation of his Consulate. All thoughtful students of history must have observed the warping influence which war and diplomacy have exerted on democratic institutions. The age of Alcibiades, the doom of the Roman Republic, and many other examples might be cited to show that free institutions can with difficulty survive the strain of a vast military organization or the insidious results of an exacting diplomacy. But never has the gulf between democracy and personal rule been so quickly spanned as by the commanding genius of Bonaparte.

The events which disgusted both England and France with war have been described above. Each antagonist had parried the attacks of the other. The blow which Bonaparte had aimed at Britain's commerce by his eastern expedition had been foiled; and a considerable French force was shut up in Egypt. His plan of relieving his starving garrison in Malta, by concluding a maritime truce, had been seen through by us; and after a blockade of two years, Valetta fell (September, 1800). But while Great

and it seems certain that he intended to form a band of desperate men who were to waylay, kidnap, or kill the First Consul in open fight. This plan was deferred by the bomb explosion for three years. As soon as he heard of this event, he exclaimed: "I'll bet that it was that —— St. Réjant. He has upset all my plans." (See "Georges Cadoudal," par G. de Cadoudal.)

Britain regained more than all her old power in the Mediterranean, she failed to make any impression on the land-power of France. The First Consul in the year 1801 compelled Naples and Portugal to give up the English alliance and to exclude our vessels and goods. In the north the results of the war had been in favour of the islanders. The Union Jack again waved triumphant on the Baltic, and all attempts of the French to rouse and support an Irish revolt had signally failed. Yet the French preparations for an invasion of England strained the resources of our exchequer and the patience of our people. The weary struggle was evidently about to close in a stalemate.

For political and financial reasons the two Powers needed repose. Bonaparte's authority was not as yet so firmly founded that he could afford to neglect the silent longings of France for peace; his institutions had not as yet taken root; and he needed money for public works and colonial enterprises. That he looked on peace as far more desirable for France than for England at the present time is clear from a confidential talk which he had with Roederer at the close of 1800. This bright thinker, to whom he often unbosomed himself, took exception to his remark that England could not wish for peace; whereupon the First Consul uttered these memorable words:

"My dear fellow, England ought not to wish for peace, because we are masters of the world. Spain is ours. We have a foothold in Italy. In Egypt we have the reversion to their tenure. Switzerland, Holland, Belgium—that is a matter irrevocably settled, on which we have declared to Prussia, Russia, and the Emperor that *we alone*, if it were necessary, would make war on all, namely, that there shall be no Stadholder in Holland, and that we will keep Belgium and the left bank of the Rhine. A stadholder in Holland would be as bad as a Bourbon in the St. Antoine suburb."[1]

[1] Roederer, "Œuvres," vol. iii., p. 352. For these negotiations see Bowman's "Preliminary Stages of the Peace of Amiens" (Toronto, 1899).

The passage is remarkable, not only for its frank statement of the terms on which England and the Continent might have peace, but also because it discloses the rank undergrowth of pride and ambition that is beginning to overtop his reasoning faculties. Even before he has heard the news of Moreau's great victory of Hohenlinden, he equates the military strength of France with that of the rest of Europe: nay, he claims without a shadow of doubt the mastery of the world: he will wage, if necessary, a double war, against England for a colonial empire, and against Europe for domination in Holland and the Rhineland. It is naught to him that that double effort has exhausted France in the reigns of Louis XIV. and Louis XV. Holland, Switzerland, Italy, shall be French provinces, Egypt and the Indies shall be her satrapies, and *la grande nation* may then rest on her glories.

Had these aims been known at Westminster, Ministers would have counted peace far more harmful than war. But, while ambition reigned at Paris, dull common sense dictated the policy of Britain. In truth, our people needed rest: we were in the first stages of an industrial revolution: our cotton and woollen industries were passing from the cottage to the factory; and a large part of our folk were beginning to cluster in grimy, ill-organized townships. Population and wealth advanced by leaps and bounds; but with them came the nineteenth-century problems of widening class distinctions and uncertainty of employment. The food-supply was often inadequate, and in 1801 the price of wheat in the London market ranged from £6 to £8 the quarter; the quartern loaf selling at times for as much as 1*s.* 10½*d.*[1]

The state of the sister island was even worse. The discontent of Ireland had been crushed by the severe repression which followed the rising of 1798; and the bonds connecting the two countries were forcibly tightened by the Act of Union of 1800. But rest and reform were urgently needed if this political welding was to acquire solid strength, and rest and reform were alike

[1] Porter, "Progress of the Nation," ch. xiv.

denied. The position of the Ministry at Westminster was also precarious. The opposition of George III. to the proposals for Catholic Emancipation, to which Pitt believed himself in honour bound, led to the resignation in February, 1801, of that able Minister. In the following month Addington, the Speaker of the House of Commons, with the complacence born of bland obtuseness, undertook to fill his place. At first, the Ministry was treated with the tolerance due to the new Premier's urbanity, but it gradually faded away into contempt for his pitiful weakness in face of the dangers that threatened the realm.

Certain unofficial efforts in the cause of peace had been made during the year 1800, by a Frenchman, M. Otto, who had been charged to proceed to London to treat with the British Government for the exchange of prisoners. For various reasons his tentative proposals as to an accommodation between the belligerents had had no issue: but he continued to reside in London, and quietly sought to bring about a good understanding. The accession of the Addington Ministry favoured the opening of negotiations, the new Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Lord Hawkesbury, announcing His Majesty's desire for peace. Indeed, the one hope of the new Ministry, and of the king who supported it as the only alternative to Catholic Emancipation, was bound up with the cause of peace. In the next chapter it will appear how disastrous were the results of that strange political situation, when a morbidly conscientious king clung to the weak Addington, and jeopardised the interests of Britain, rather than accept a strong Minister and a measure of religious equality.

Napoleon received Hawkesbury's first overtures, those of March 21st, 1801, with thinly veiled scorn; but the news of Nelson's victory at Copenhagen and of the assassination of the Czar Paul, the latter of which wrung from him a cry of rage, ended his hopes of crushing us; and negotiations were now formally begun. On the 14th of April, Great Britain demanded that the French

should evacuate Egypt, while she herself would give up Minorca, but retain the following conquests: Malta, Tobago, Martinique, Trinidad, Essequibo, Demerara, Berbice, Ceylon, and (a little later) Curaçoa; while, if the Cape of Good Hope were restored to the Dutch, it was to be a free port: an indemnity was also to be found for the Prince of Orange for the loss of his Netherlands. These claims were declared by Bonaparte to be inadmissible. He on his side urged the far more impracticable demand of the *status quo ante bellum* in the East and West Indies and in the Mediterranean; which would imply the surrender, not only of our many naval conquests, but also of our gains in Hindostan at the expense of the late Tippoo Sahib's dominions. In the ensuing five months the British Government gained some noteworthy successes in diplomacy and war. It settled the disputes arising out of the Armed Neutrality League; there was every prospect of our troops defeating those of France in Egypt; and our navy captured St. Eustace and Saba in the West Indies.

As a set-off to our efforts by sea, Bonaparte instigated a war between Spain and Portugal, in order that the latter Power might be held as a "guarantee for the general peace." Spain, however, merely waged a "war of oranges," and came to terms with her neighbour in the Treaty of Badajoz, June 6th, 1801, whereby she gained the small frontier district of Olivenza. This fell far short of the First Consul's intentions. Indeed, such was his annoyance at the conduct of the Court of Madrid and the complaisance of his brother Lucien Bonaparte, who was ambassador there, that he determined to make Spain bear a heavy share of the English demands. On June 22nd, 1801, he wrote to his brother at Madrid:

"I have already caused the English to be informed that I will never depart, as regards Portugal, from the *ultimatum* addressed to M. d'Araujo, and that the *status quo ante bellum* for Portugal must amount, for Spain, to the restitution of Trinidad; for France, to the restitution of Martinique and

Tobago; and for Batavia [Holland], to that of Curaçoa and some other small American isles." [1]

In other words, if Portugal at the close of this whipped-up war retained her present possessions, then England must renounce her claims to Trinidad, Martinique, Tobago, Curaçoa, etc.: and he summed up his contention in the statement that "in signing this treaty Charles IV. has consented to the loss of Trinidad." Further pressure on Portugal compelled her to cede part of Northern Brazil to France and to pay her 20,000,000 francs.

A still more striking light is thrown on Bonaparte's diplomatic methods by the following question, addressed to Lord Hawkesbury on June 15th:

"If, supposing that the French Government should accede to the arrangements proposed for the East Indies by England, and should adopt the *status quo ante bellum* for Portugal, the King of England would consent to the re-establishment of the *status quo* in the Mediterranean and in America."

The British Minister in his reply of June 25th explained what the phrase *status quo ante bellum* in regard to the Mediterranean would really imply. It would necessitate, not merely the evacuation of Egypt by the French, but also that of the Kingdom of Sardinia (including Nice), the Duchy of Tuscany, and the independence of the rest of the peninsula. He had already offered that we should evacuate Minorca; but he now stated that, if France retained her influence over Italy, England would claim Malta as a set-off to the vast extension of French territorial influence, and in order to protect English commerce in those seas: for the rest, the British Government could not regard the maintenance of the integrity of Portugal as an equivalent to the surrender by Great Britain of her West Indian conquests, especially as France had acquired further portions of Saint Domingo. Nevertheless he offered to restore Trinidad to Spain, if she would reinstate Portugal in the frontier strip of Olivenza; and, on

[1] "New Letters of Napoleon I." See too his letter of June 17th.

August 5th, he told Otto that we would give up Malta if it became independent.

Meanwhile events were, on the whole, favourable to Great Britain. She made peace with Russia on favourable terms; and in the Mediterranean, despite a first success gained by the French Admiral Linois at Algesiras, a second battle brought back victory to the Union Jack. An attack made by Nelson on the flotilla at Boulogne was a failure (August 15th). But at the close of August the French commander in Egypt, General Menou, was constrained to agree to the evacuation of Egypt by his troops, which were to be sent back to France on English vessels. This event had been expected by Bonaparte, and the secret instruction which he forwarded to Otto at London shows the nicety of his calculation as to the advantages to be reaped by France owing to her receiving the news while it was still unknown in England. He ordered Otto to fix October the 2nd for the close of the negotiations:

"You will understand the importance of this when you reflect that Menou may possibly not be able to hold out in Alexandria beyond the first of Vendémiaire (September 22nd); that, at this season, the winds are fair to come from Egypt, and ships reach Italy and Trieste in very few days. Thus it is necessary to push them [the negotiations] to a conclusion before Vendémiaire 10."

The advantages of an irresponsible autocrat in negotiating with a Ministry dependent on Parliament have rarely been more signally shown. Anxious to gain popularity, and unable to stem the popular movement for peace, Addington and Hawkesbury yielded to this request for a fixed limit of time; and the preliminaries of peace were signed at London on October 1st, 1801, the very day before the news arrived there that one of our demands was rendered useless by the actual surrender of the French in Egypt.[1]

[1] "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. iii., pp. 380-382. Few records exist of the negotiations between Lord Hawkesbury and M. Otto at London. I have found none in the Foreign Office archives.

The chief conditions of the preliminaries were as follows: Great Britain restored to France, Spain, and the Batavian Republic all their possessions and colonies recently conquered by her except Trinidad and Ceylon. The Cape of Good Hope was given back to the Dutch, but remained open to British and French commerce. Malta was to be restored to the Order of St. John, and placed under the guarantee and protection of a third Power to be agreed on in the definitive treaty. Egypt returned to the control of the Sublime Porte. The existing possessions of Portugal (that is, exclusive of Olivenza) were preserved intact. The French agreed to loose their hold on the Kingdom of Naples and the Roman territory; while the British were also to evacuate Porto Ferrajo (Elba) and the other ports and islands which they held in the Mediterranean and Adriatic. The young Republic of the Seven Islands (Ionian Islands) was recognized by France: and the fisheries on the coasts of Newfoundland and the adjacent isles were placed on their former footing, subject to "such arrangements as shall appear just and reciprocally useful."

It was remarked as significant of the new docility of George III., that the empty title of "King of France," which he and his predecessors had affected, was now formally resigned, and the *fleurs de lys* ceased to appear on the royal arms.

Thus, with three exceptions, Great Britain had given way on every point of importance since the first declaration of her claims; the three exceptions were Trinidad and Ceylon, which she gained from the allies of France; and Egypt, the recovery of which from the French was already achieved, though it was unknown at London. On every detail but these Bonaparte had gained a signal diplomatic success. His skill and tenacity bade fair to recover for France, Martinique, Tobago, and Santa Lucia, then in British hands, as well as the French stations in

The general facts are given by Garden, "Traités," vol. vii., ch. xxxi.; only a few of the discussions were reduced to writing. This seriously prejudiced our interests at Amiens.

India. The only British gains, after nine years of warfare, fruitful in naval triumphs, but entailing an addition of £290,000,000 to the National Debt, were the islands of Trinidad and the Dutch possessions in Ceylon. And yet in the six months spent in negotiations the general course of events had been favourable to the northern Power. What then had been lacking? Certainly not valour to her warriors, nor good fortune to her flag; but merely brain power to her rulers. They had little of that foresight, skill, and intellectual courage, without which even the exploits of a Nelson are of little permanent effect.

Reserving for treatment in the next chapter the questions arising from these preliminaries and the resulting Peace of Amiens, we turn now to consider their bearing on Bonaparte's position as First Consul. The return of peace after an exhausting war is always welcome; yet the patriotic Briton who saw the National Debt more than doubled, with no adequate gain in land or influence, could not but contrast the difference in the fortunes of France. That Power had now gained the Rhine boundary; her troops garrisoned the fortresses of Holland and Northern Italy; her chief dictated his will to German princelings and to the once free Switzers; while the Court of Madrid, nay, the Eternal City herself, obeyed his behests. And all this prodigious expansion had been accomplished at little apparent cost to France herself; for the victors' bill had been very largely met out of the resources of the conquered territories. It is true that her nobles and clergy had suffered fearful losses in lands and treasure, while her trading classes had cruelly felt the headlong fall in value of her paper notes: but in a land endowed with a bounteous soil and climate such losses are soon repaired, and the signature of the peace with England left France comparatively prosperous. In October the First Consul also concluded peace with Russia, and came to a friendly understanding with the Czar on Italian affairs and the question of indemnities for the dispossessed German Princes.[1]

[1] Lefebvre, "Cabinets de l'Europe," ch. iv

Bonaparte now strove to extend the colonies and commerce of France, a topic to which we shall return later on, and to develop her internal resources. The chief roads were repaired, and ceased to be in the miserable condition in which the abolition of the *corvées* in 1789 had left them: canals were dug to connect the chief river systems of France, or were greatly improved; and Paris soon benefited from the construction of the Scheldt and Oise canal, which brought the resources of Belgium within easy reach of the centre of France. Ports were deepened and extended; and Marseilles entered on golden vistas of prosperity soon to be closed by the renewal of war with England. Communications with Italy were facilitated by the improvement of the road between Marseilles and Genoa, as also of the tracks leading over the Simplon, Mont Cenis, and Mont Genèvre passes: the roads leading to the Rhine and along its left bank also attested the First Consul's desire, not only to extend commerce, but to protect his natural boundary on the east. The results of this road-making were to be seen in the campaign of Ulm, when the French forces marched from Boulogne to the Black Forest at an unparalleled speed.

Paris in particular felt his renovating hand. With the abrupt, determined tones which he assumed more and more on reaching absolute power, he one day said to Chaptal at Malmaison:

"I intend to make Paris the most beautiful capital of the world: I wish that in ten years it should number two millions of inhabitants." "But," replied his Minister of the Interior, "one cannot improvise population; . . . as it is, Paris would scarcely support one million"; and he instanced the want of good drinking water. "What are your plans for giving water to Paris?" Chaptal gave two alternatives—artesian wells or the bringing of water from the River Ourcq to Paris. "I adopt the latter plan: go home and order five hundred men to set to work to-morrow at La Villette to dig the canal."

Such was the inception of a great public work which cost more than half a million sterling. The provisioning of Paris also received careful attention, a large reserve

of wheat being always kept on hand for the satisfaction of "a populace which is only dangerous when it is hungry." Bonaparte therefore insisted on corn being stored and sold in large quantities and at a very low price, even when considerable loss was thereby entailed.[1] But besides supplying *panem* he also provided *circenses* to an extent never known even in the days of Louis XV. State aid was largely granted to the chief theatres, where Bonaparte himself was a frequent attendant, and a willing captive to the charms of the actress Mlle. Georges.

The beautifying of Paris was, however, the chief means employed by Bonaparte for weaning its populace from politics; and his efforts to this end were soon crowned with complete success. Here again the events of the Revolution had left the field clear for vast works of reconstruction such as would have been impossible but for the abolition of the many monastic institutions of old Paris. On or near the sites of the famous Feuillants and Jacobins he now laid down splendid thoroughfares; and where the constitutionals or reds a decade previously had perorated and fought, the fashionable world of Paris now rolled in gilded cabriolets along streets whose names recalled the Italian and Egyptian triumphs of the First Consul. Art and culture bowed down to the ruler who ordered the renovation of the Louvre, which now became the treasure-house of painting and sculpture, enriched by masterpieces taken from many an Italian gallery. No enterprise has more conspicuously helped to assure the position of Paris as the capital of the world's culture than Bonaparte's grouping of the nation's art treasures in a central and magnificent building. In the first year of his Empire Napoleon gave orders for the construction of vast galleries which were to connect the northern pavilion of the Tuileries with the Louvre and form a splendid façade to the new Rue de Rivoli. Despite the expense, the work was pushed on until it was suddenly arrested by the downfall of the Empire, and was left to the great man's nephew to complete. Though it is

[1] Chaptal, "Mes Souvenirs," pp. 287, 291, and 359.

possible, as Chaptal avers, that the original design aimed at the formation of a central fortress, yet to all lovers of art, above all to the hero-worshipping Heine, the new Louvre was a sure pledge of Napoleon's immortality.

Other works which combined beauty with utility were the prolongation of the quays along the left bank of the Seine, the building of three bridges over that river, the improvement of the Jardin des Plantes, together with that of other parks and open spaces, and the completion of the Conservatoire of Arts and Trades. At a later date, the military spirit of the Empire received signal illustration in the erection of the Vendôme column, the Arc de Triomphe, and the consecration, or desecration, of the Madeleine as a temple of glory.

Many of these works were subsequent to the period which we are considering; but the enterprises of the Emperor represent the designs of the First Consul; and the plans for the improvement of Paris formed during the Consulate were sufficient to inspire the Parisians with lively gratitude and to turn them from political speculations to scenes of splendour and gaiety that recalled the days of Louis XIV. If we may believe the testimony of Romilly, who visited Paris in 1802, the new policy had even then attained its end.

"The quiet despotism, which leaves everybody who does not wish to meddle with politics (and few at present have any such wish) in the full and secure enjoyment of their property and of their pleasures, is a sort of paradise, compared with the agitation, the perpetual alarms, the scenes of infamy, of bloodshed, which accompanied the pretended liberties of France."

But while acknowledging the material benefits of Bonaparte's rule, the same friend of liberty notes with concern:

"That he [Bonaparte] meditates the gaining fresh laurels in war can hardly be doubted, if the accounts which one hears of his restless and impatient disposition be true."

However much the populace delighted in this new

régime, the many ardent souls who had dared and achieved so much in the sacred quest of liberty could not refrain from protesting against the innovations which were restoring personal rule. Though the Press was gagged, though as many as thirty-two Departments were subjected to the scrutiny of special tribunals, which, under the guise of stamping out brigandage, frequently punished opponents of the Government, yet the voice of criticism was not wholly silenced. The project of the Concordat was sharply opposed in the Tribunate, which also ventured to declare that the first sections of the Civil Codes were not conformable to the principles of 1789 and to the first draft of a code presented to the Convention. The Government thereupon refused to send to the Tribunate any important measures, but merely flung them a mass of petty details to discuss, as "*bones to gnaw*," until the time for the renewal by lot of a fifth of its members should come round. During a discussion at the Council of State, the First Consul hinted with much frankness at the methods which ought to be adopted to quell the factious opposition of the Tribunate:

"One cannot work with an institution so productive of disorder. The constitution has created a legislative power composed of three bodies. None of these branches has any right to organize itself: that must be done by the law. Therefore we must make a body which shall organize the manner of deliberations of these three branches. The Tribunate ought to be divided into five sections. The discussion of laws will take place secretly in each section: one might even introduce a discussion between these sections and those of the Council of State. Only the reporter will speak publicly. Then things will go on reasonably."

Having delivered this opinion, *ex cathedra*, he departed (January 7th, 1802) for Lyons, there to be invested with supreme authority in the reconstituted Cisalpine, or as it was now termed, Italian Republic[1]

[1] See Chapter XIV. of this work.

Returning at the close of the month, radiant with the lustre of this new dignity, he was able to bend the Tribunate and the *Corps Législatif* to his will. The renewal of their membership by one-fifth served as the opportunity for subjecting them to the more pliable Senate. This august body of highly-paid members holding office for life had the right of nominating the new members; but hitherto the retiring members had been singled out by lot. Roederer, acting on a hint of the time-serving Second Consul, now proposed in the Council of State that the retiring members of those Chambers should thenceforth be appointed by the Senate, and not by lot; for the principle of the lot, he quaintly urged, was hostile to the right of election which belonged to the Senate. Against such conscious sophistry all the bolts of logic were harmless. The question was left undecided, in order that the Senate might forthwith declare in favour of its own right to determine every year not only the elections to, but the exclusions from, the Tribunate and the *Corps Législatif*. A *senatus consultum* of March legalized this monstrous innovation, which led to the exclusion from the Tribunate of zealous republicans like Benjamin Constant, Isnard, Ganilh, Daunou, and Chénier. The infusion of the senatorial nominees served to complete the nullity of these bodies; and the Tribunate, the lineal descendant of the terrible Convention, was gagged and bound within eight years of the stilling of Danton's mighty voice.

In days when civic zeal was the strength of the French Republic, the mere suggestion of such a violation of liberty would have cost the speaker his life. But since the rise of Bonaparte, civic sentiments had yielded place to the military spirit and to boundless pride in the nation's glory. Whenever republican feelings were outraged, there were sufficient distractions to dissipate any of the sombre broodings which Bonaparte so heartily disliked; and an event of international importance now came to still the voice of political criticism.

The signature of the definitive treaty of peace with Great Britain (March 25th, 1802) sufficed to drown the muttered discontent of the old republican party under the pæans of a nation's joy. The jubilation was natural. While Londoners were grumbling at the sacrifices which Addington's timidity had entailed, all France rang with praises of the diplomatic skill which could rescue several islands from England's grip and yet assure French supremacy on the Continent. The event seemed to call for some sign of the nation's thankfulness to the restorer of peace and prosperity. The hint having been given by the tactful Cambacérès to some of the members of the Tribunate, this now docile body expressed a wish that there should be a striking token of the national gratitude; and a motion to that effect was made by the Senate to the *Corps Législatif* and to the Government itself.

The form which the national memorial should take was left entirely vague. Under ordinary circumstances the outcome would have been a column or a statue: to a Napoleon it was monarchy.

The Senate was in much doubt as to the fit course of action. The majority desired to extend the Consulate for a second term of ten years, and a formal motion to that effect was made on May 7th. It was opposed by a few, some of whom demanded the prolongation for life. The president, Tronchet, prompted by Fouché and other republicans, held that only the question of prolonging the Consulate for another term of ten years was before the Senate: and the motion was carried by sixty votes against one: the dissentient voice was that of the Girondin Lanjuinais. The report of this vote disconcerted the First Consul, but he replied with some constraint that as the people had invested him with the supreme magistrature, he would not feel assured of its confidence unless the present proposal were also sanctioned by its vote: "You judge that I owe the people another sacrifice: I will give it if the people's voice orders what your vote now authorizes." But before the mass vote of the people was taken, an important change had been made in the pro-

posal itself. It was well known that Bonaparte was dissatisfied with the senatorial offer: and at a special session of the Council of State, at which Ministers were present, the Second Consul urged that they must now decide how, when, and *on what question* the people were to be consulted. The whole question recently settled by the Senate was thus reopened in a way that illustrated the advantage of multiplying councils and of keeping them under official tutelage. The Ministers present asserted that the people disapproved of the limitations of time imposed by the Senate; and after some discussion Cambacérès procured the decision that the consultation of the people should be on the questions whether the First Consul should hold his power for life, and whether he should nominate his successor.

To the latter part of this proposal the First Consul offered a well-judged refusal. To consult the people on the restoration of monarchy would, as yet, have been as inopportune as it was superfluous. After gaining complete power, Bonaparte could be well assured as to the establishment of an hereditary claim. The former and less offensive part of the proposal was therefore submitted to the people; and to it there could be only one issue amidst the prosperity brought by the peace, and the surveillance exercised by the prefects and the grateful clergy now brought back by the Concordat. The Consulate for Life was voted by the enormous majority of more than 3,500,000 affirmative votes against 8,374 negatives. But among these dissentients were many honoured names: among military men Carnot, Drouot, Mouton, and Bernard opposed the innovation; and Lafayette made the public statement that he could not vote for such a magistracy unless political liberty were guaranteed. A *senatus consultum* of August 1st forthwith proclaimed Napoleon Bonaparte Consul for Life and ordered the erection of a Statue of Peace, holding in one hand the victor's laurel and in the other the senatorial decree.

On the following day Napoleon—for henceforth he

generally used his Christian name like other monarchs—presented to the Council of State a project of an organic law, which virtually amounted to a new constitution. The mere fact of its presentation at so early a date suffices to prove how completely he had prepared for the recent change and how thoroughly assured he was of success. This important measure was hurried through the Senate, and, without being submitted to the Tribunate or *Corps Législatif*, still less to the people, for whose sanction he had recently affected so much concern—was declared to be the fundamental law of the State.

The fifth constitution of revolutionary France may be thus described. It began by altering the methods of election. In place of Sieyès' lists of notabilities, Bonaparte proposed a simpler plan. The adult citizens of each canton were thenceforth to meet, for electoral purposes, in primary assemblies, to name two candidates for the office of *juge de paix* (*i.e.*, magistrate) and town councillor, and to choose the members of the "electoral colleges" for the *arrondissement* and for the Department. In the latter case only the 600 most wealthy men of the Department were eligible. An official or aristocratic tinge was to be imparted to these electoral colleges by the infusion of members selected by the First Consul from the members of the Legion of Honour. Fixity of opinion was also assured by members holding office for life; and, as they were elected in the midst of the enthusiasm aroused by the Peace of Amiens, they were decidedly Bonapartist.

The electoral colleges had the following powers: they nominated two candidates for each place vacant in the merely consultative councils of their respective areas, and had the equally barren honour of presenting two candidates for the Tribunate—the final act of *selection* being decided by the executive, that is, by the First Consul. Corresponding privileges were accorded to the electoral colleges of the Department, save that these plutocratic bodies had the right of presenting candidates for admission to the Senate. The lists of candidates for the *Corps*

Législatif were to be formed by the joint action of the electoral colleges, namely, those of the Departments and those of the *arrondissements* But as the resulting councils and parliamentary bodies had only the shadow of power, the whole apparatus was but an imposing machine for winnowing the air and threshing chaff.

The First Consul secured few additional rights or attributes, except the exercise of the royal prerogative of granting pardon. But, in truth, his own powers were already so large that they were scarcely susceptible of extension. The three Consuls held office for life, and were *ex officio* members of the Senate. The second and third Consuls were nominated by the Senate on the presentation of the First Consul: the Senate might reject two names proposed by him for either office, but they must accept his third nominee. The First Consul might deposit in the State archives his proposal as to his successor: if the Senate rejected this proposal, the second and third Consuls made a suggestion; and if it were rejected, one of the two whom they thereupon named must be elected by the Senate. The three legislative bodies lost practically all their powers, those of the *Corps Législatif* going to the Senate, those of the Council of State to an official Cabal formed out of it; while the Tribunate was forced to *debate secretly in five sections*, where, as Bonaparte observed, *they might jabber as they liked.*

On the other hand, the attributes of the Senate were signally enhanced. It was thenceforth charged, not only with the preservation of the republican constitution, but with its interpretation in disputed points, and its completion wherever it should be found wanting. Furthermore, by means of organic *senatus consulta* it was empowered to make constitutions for the French colonies, or to suspend trial by jury for five years in any Department, or even to declare it outside the limits of the constitution. It now gained the right of being consulted in regard to the ratification of treaties, previously enjoyed by the *Corps Législatif.* Finally, it could dissolve the *Corps Législatif* and the Tribunate. But this formidable machinery was

kept under the strict control of the chief engineer: all these powers were set in motion on the initiative of the Government; and the proposals for its laws, or *senatus consulta*, were discussed in the Cabal of the Council of State named by the First Consul. This precaution might have been deemed superfluous by a ruler less careful about details than Napoleon; the composition of the Senate was such as to assure its pliability; for though it continued to renew its ranks by co-optation, yet that privilege was restricted in the following way: from the lists of candidates for the Senate sent up by the electoral colleges of the Departments, Napoleon selected three for each seat vacant; one of those three must be chosen by the Senate. Moreover, the First Consul was to be allowed directly to nominate forty members in addition to the eighty prescribed by the constitution of 1799. Thus, by direct or indirect means, the Senate soon became a strict Napoleonic preserve, to which only the most devoted adherents could aspire. And yet, such is the vanity of human efforts, it was this very body which twelve years later was to vote his deposition.[1]

The victory of action over talk, of the executive over the legislature, of the one supremely able man over the discordant and helpless many, was now complete. The process was startlingly swift; yet its chief stages are not difficult to trace. The orators of the first two National Assemblies of France, after wrecking the old royal authority, were constrained by the pressure of events to intrust the supervision of the executive powers to important committees, whose functions grew with the intensity of the national danger. Amidst the agonies of 1793, when France was menaced by the First Coalition, the Committee of Public Safety leaped forth as the ensanguined champion of democracy; and, as the crisis developed in intensity, this terrible body and the Committee of General Security virtually governed France.

After the repulse of the invaders and the fall of Robespierre, the return to ordinary methods was marked by the

[1] Thibaudeau, *op. cit.*, ch. xxvi.; Lavisse, "Napoléon," ch. i.

institution of the Directory, when five men, chosen by the legislature, controlled the executive powers and the general policy of the Republic: that compromise was forcibly ended by the stroke of Brumaire. Three Consuls then seized the reins, and two years later a single charioteer gripped the destinies of France. His powers were, in fact, ultimately derived from those of the secret committees of the terrorists. But, unlike the supremacy of Robespierre, that of Napoleon could not be disputed; for the general, while guarding all the material boons which the Revolution had conferred, conciliated the interests and classes whereon the civilian had so brutally trampled. The new autocracy therefore possessed a solid strength which that of the terrorists could never possess. Indeed, it was more absolute than the dictatorial power that Rousseau had outlined. The philosopher had asserted that, while silencing the legislative power, the dictator really made it vocal, and that he could do everything but make laws. But Napoleon, after 1802, did far more: he suppressed debates and yet drew laws from his subservient legislature. Whether, then, we regard its practical importance for France and Europe, or limit our view to the mental sagacity and indomitable will-power required for its accomplishment, the triumph of Napoleon in the three years subsequent to his return from Egypt is the most stupendous recorded in the history of civilized peoples.

The populace consoled itself for the loss of political liberty by the splendour of the fête which heralded the title of First Consul for Life, proclaimed on August 15th: that day was also memorable as being the First Consul's thirty-third birthday, the festival of the Assumption, and the anniversary of the ratification of the Concordat. The decorations and fireworks were worthy of so remarkable a confluence of solemnities. High on one of the towers of Notre Dame glittered an enormous star, and at its centre there shone the sign of the Zodiac which had shed its influence over his first hours of life. The myriads of spectators who gazed at that natal emblem

might well have thought that his life's star was now at its zenith. Few could have dared to think that it was to mount far higher into unknown depths of space, blazing as a baleful portent to kings and peoples; still less was there any Cassandra shriek of doom as to its final headlong fall into the wastes of ocean. All was joy and jubilation over a career that had even now surpassed the records of antique heroism, that blended the romance of oriental prowess with the beneficent toils of the legislator, and prospered alike in war and peace.

And yet black care cast one shadow over that jubilant festival. There was a void in the First Consul's life such as saddened but few of the millions of peasants who looked up to him as their saviour. His wife had borne him no heir: and there seemed no prospect that a child of his own would ever succeed to his glorious heritage. Family joys, it seemed, were not for him. Suspicions and bickerings were his lot. His brothers, in their feverish desire for the establishment of a Bonapartist dynasty, ceaselessly urged that he should take means to provide himself with a legitimate heir, in the last resort by divorcing Josephine. With a consideration for her feelings which does him credit, Napoleon refused to countenance such proceedings. Yet it is certain that from this time onwards he kept in view the desirability, on political grounds, of divorcing her, and made this the excuse for indulgence in amours against which Josephine's tears and reproaches were all in vain.

The consolidation of personal rule, the institution of the Legion of Honour, and the return of very many of the emigrant nobles under the terms of the recent amnesty, favoured the growth of luxury in the capital and of Court etiquette at the Tuileries and St. Cloud. At these palaces the pomp of the *ancien régime* was laboriously copied. General Duroc, stiff republican though he was, received the appointment of Governor of the Palace; under him were chamberlains and prefects of the palace, who enforced a ceremonial that struggled to be monarchical. The gorgeous liveries and sumptuous garments

of the reign of Louis XV. speedily replaced the military dress which even civilians had worn under the warlike Republic. High boots, sabres, and regimental headgear gave way to buckled shoes, silk stockings, Court rapiers, and light hats, the last generally held under the arm. Tricolour cockades were discarded, along with the revolutionary jargon which *thou'd* and *citizen'd* everyone; and men began to purge their speech of some of the obscene terms which had haunted clubs and camps.

It was remarked, however, that the First Consul still clung to the use of the term *citizen*, and that amidst the surprising combinations of colours that flecked his Court, he generally wore only the uniform of a colonel of grenadiers or of the light infantry of the consular guard. This conduct resulted partly from his early dislike of luxury, but partly, doubtless, from a conviction that republicans will forgive much in a man who, like Vespasian, discards the grandeur which his prowess has won, and shines by his very plainness. To trifling matters such as these Napoleon always attached great importance; for, as he said to Admiral Malcolm at St. Helena: "In France trifles are great things: reason is nothing."[1] Besides, genius so commanding as his little needed the external trappings wherewith ordinary mortals hide their nullity. If his attire was simple, it but set off the better the play of his mobile features, and the rich, unfailing flow of his conversation. Perhaps no clearer and more pleasing account of his appearance and his conduct at a reception has ever been given to the world than this sketch of the great man in one of his gentler moods by John Leslie Foster, who visited Paris shortly after the Peace of Amiens:

"He is about five feet seven inches high, delicately and gracefully made; his hair a dark brown crop, thin and lank; his complexion smooth, pale, and sallow; his eyes gray, but very animated; his eye-brows light brown, thin and projecting. All his features, particularly his mouth and nose, fine, sharp,

[1] "A Diary of St. Helena," by Lady Malcolm, p. 97.

defined, and expressive beyond description; expressive of what? Not of anything *percé* as the prints expressed him, still less of anything *méchant;* nor has he anything of that eye whose bend doth awe the world. The true expression of his countenance is a pleasing melancholy, which, whenever he speaks, relaxes into the most agreeable and gracious smile you can conceive. To this you must add the appearance of deep and intense thought, but above all the predominating expression a look of calm and tranquil resolution and intrepidity which nothing human could discompose. His address is the finest I have ever seen, and said by those who have travelled to exceed not only every Prince and Potentate now in being, but even all those whose memory has come down to us. He has more unaffected dignity than I could conceive in man. His address is the gentlest and most prepossessing you can conceive, which is seconded by the greatest fund of levée conversation that I suppose any person ever possessed. He speaks deliberately, but very fluently, with particular emphasis, and in a rather low tone of voice. While he speaks, his features are still more expressive than his words."[1]

In contrast with this intellectual power and becoming simplicity of attire, how stupid and tawdry were the bevies of soulless women and the dumb groups of half-tamed soldiers! How vapid also the rules of etiquette and precedence which starched the men and agitated the minds of their consorts! Yet, while soaring above these rules with easy grace, the First Consul imposed them rigidly on the crowd of eager courtiers. On these burning questions he generally took the advice of M. de Rémusat, whose tact and acquaintance with Court customs were now of much service; while the sprightly wit of his young wife attracted Josephine, as it has all readers of her piquant but rather spiteful memoirs. In her pages we catch a glimpse of the life of that singular Court; the attempts at aping the inimitable manners of

[1] "The Two Duchesses," edited by Vere Foster, p. 172. Lord Malmesbury ("Diaries," vol. iv., p. 257) is less favourable: "When B. is out of his ceremonious habits, his language is often coarse and vulgar."

the *ancien régime;* the pompous nullity of the second and third Consuls; the tawdry magnificence of the costumes; the studied avoidance of any word that implied even a modicum of learning or a distant acquaintance with politics; the nervous preoccupation about Napoleon's moods and whims; the graceful manners of Josephine that rarely failed to charm away his humours, except when she herself had been outrageously slighted for some passing favourite; above all, the leaden dullness of conversation, which drew from Chaptal the confession that life there was the life of a galley slave. And if we seek for the hidden reason why a ruler eminently endowed with mental force and freshness should have endured so laboured a masquerade, we find it in his strikingly frank confession to Madame de Rémusat: *It is fortunate that the French are to be ruled through their vanity.*

CHAPTER XIV

THE PEACE OF AMIENS

THE previous chapter dealt in the main with the internal affairs of France and the completion of Napoleon's power: it touched on foreign affairs only so far as to exhibit the close connection between the First Consul's diplomatic victory over England and his triumph over the republican constitution in his adopted country. But it is time now to review the course of the negotiations which led up to the Treaty of Amiens.

In order to realize the advantages which France then had over England, it will be well briefly to review the condition of our land at that time. Our population was far smaller than that of the French Republic. France, with her recent acquisitions in Belgium, the Rhineland, Savoy, Nice, and Piedmont, numbered nearly 40,000,000 inhabitants: but the census returns of Great Britain for 1801 showed only a total of 10,942,000 souls, while the numbers for Ireland, arguing from the rather untrustworthy return of 1813, may be reckoned at about six and a half millions. The prodigious growth of the English-speaking people had not as yet fully commenced either in the motherland, the United States, or in the small and struggling settlements of Canada and Australia. Its future expansion was to be assured by industrial and social causes, and by the events considered in this and in subsequent chapters. It was a small people that had for several months faced with undaunted front the gigantic power of Bonaparte and that of the Armed Neutrals.

This population of less than 18,000,000 souls, of which

nearly one-third openly resented the Act of Union recently imposed on Ireland, was burdened by a National Debt which amounted to £537,000,000, and entailed a yearly charge of more than £20,000,000 sterling. In the years of war with revolutionary France the annual expenditure had risen from £19,859,000 (for 1792) to the total of £61,329,000, which necessitated an income tax of 10 per cent. on all incomes of £200 and upwards. Yet, despite party feuds, the nation was never stronger, and its fleets had never won more brilliant and solid triumphs. The chief naval historian of France admits that we had captured no fewer than 50 ships of the line, and had lost to our enemies only five, thereby raising the strength of our fighting line to 189, while that of France had sunk to 47.[1] The prowess of Sir Arthur Wellesley was also beginning to revive in India the ancient lustre of the British arms; but the events of 1802-3 were to show that our industrial enterprise, and the exploits of our sailors and soldiers, were by themselves of little avail when matched in a diplomatic contest against the vast resources of France and the embodied might of a Napoleon.

Men and institutions were everywhere receiving the imprint of his will. France was as wax under his genius. The sovereigns of Spain, Italy, and Germany obeyed his *fiat*. Even the stubborn Dutch bent before him. On the plea of defeating Orange intrigues, he imposed a new constitution on the Batavian Republic whose independence he had agreed to respect. Its Directory was now replaced by a Regency which relieved the deputies of the people of all responsibility. A *plébiscite* showed 52,000 votes against, and 16,000 for, the new *régime;* but, as 350,000 had not voted, their silence was taken for consent, and Bonaparte's will became law (September, 1801).

We are now in a position to appreciate the position of France and Great Britain. Before the signature of the preliminaries of peace at London on October 1st, 1801,

[1] Jurien de la Gravière, "Guerres Maritimes," vol. ii., chap. vii.

our Government had given up its claims to the Cape, Malta, Tobago, Martinique, Essequibo, Demerara, Berbice, and Curaçoa, retaining of its conquests only Trinidad and Ceylon.

A belated attempt had, indeed, been made to retain Tobago. The Premier and the Foreign Secretary, Lord Hawkesbury, were led by the French political agent in London, M. Otto, to believe that, in the ensuing negotiations at Amiens, every facility would be given by the French Government towards its retrocession to us, and that this act would be regarded as the means of indemnifying Great Britain for the heavy expense of supporting many thousands of French and Dutch prisoners. The Cabinet, relying on this promise as binding between honourable men, thereupon endeavoured to obtain the assent of George III. to the preliminaries in their ultimate form, and only the prospect of regaining Tobago by this compromise induced the King to give it. When it was too late, King and Ministers realized their mistake in relying on verbal promises and in failing to procure a written statement.[1]

The abandonment by Ministers of their former claim to Malta is equally strange. Nelson, though he held Malta to be useless as a base for the British fleet watching Toulon, made the memorable statement: "I consider Malta as a most important outwork to India." But a despatch from St. Petersburg, stating that the new Czar had concluded a formal treaty of alliance with the Order of St. John settled in Russia, may have convinced Addington and his colleagues that it would be better to forego all claim to Malta in order to cement the newly won friendship of Russia. Whatever may have been their motive, British Ministers consented to cede the island to the Knights of St. John under the protection of some third Power.

The preliminaries of peace were further remarkable for

[1] These facts were fully acknowledged later by Otto: see his despatch of January 6th, 1802, to Talleyrand, published by Du Casse in his "Négociations relatives au Traité d'Amiens," vol. iii

three strange omissions. They did not provide for the renewal of previous treaties of peace between the late combatants. War is held to break all previous treaties; and by failing to require the renewal of the treaties of 1713, 1763, and 1783, it was now open to Spain and France to cement, albeit in a new form, that Family Compact which it had long been the aim of British diplomacy to dissolve: the failure to renew those earlier treaties rendered it possible for the Court of Madrid to alienate any of its colonies to France, as at that very time was being arranged with respect to Louisiana.

The second omission was equally remarkable. No mention was made of any renewal of commercial intercourse between England and France. Doubtless a complete settlement of this question would have been difficult. British merchants would have looked for a renewal of that enlightened treaty of commerce of 1786-7, which had aroused the bitter opposition of French manufacturers. But the question might have been broached at London, and its omission from the preliminaries served as a reason for shelving it in the definitive treaty—a piece of folly which at once provoked the severest censure from British manufacturers, who thereby lost the markets of France, and her subject States, Holland, Spain, Switzerland, Genoa, and Etruria.

And, finally, the terms of peace provided no compensation either for the French royal House or for the dispossessed House of Orange. Here again, it would have been very difficult to find a recompense such as the Bourbons could with dignity have accepted; and the suggestion made by one of the royalist exiles to Lord Hawkesbury, that Great Britain should seize Crete and hand it over to them, will show how desperate was their case.[1] Nevertheless, some effort should have been made by a Government which had so often proclaimed its championship of the legitimist cause. Still more glaring was the omission of any stipulation for an indemnity for

[1] "F. O.," France, No. 59. The memoir is dated October 19th, 1801.

the House of Orange, now exiled from the Batavian Republic. That claim, though urged at the outset, found no place in the preliminaries; and the mingled surprise and contempt felt in the *salons* of Paris at the conduct of the British Government is shown in a semi-official report sent thence by one of its secret agents:

"I cannot get it into my head that the British Ministry has acted in good faith in subscribing to preliminaries of peace, which, considering the respective position of the parties, would be harmful to the English people. . . . People are persuaded in France that the moderation of England is only a snare put in Bonaparte's way, and it is mainly in order to dispel it that our journals have received the order to make much of the advantages which must accrue to England from the conquests retained by her; but the journalists have convinced nobody, and it is said openly that if our European conquests are consolidated by a general peace, France will, within ten years, subjugate all Europe, Great Britain included, despite all her vast dominions in India. Only within the last few days have people here believed in the sincerity of the English preliminaries of peace, and they say everywhere that, after having gloriously sailed past the rocks that Bonaparte's cunning had placed in its track, the British Ministry has completely foundered at the mouth of the harbour. People blame the whole structure of the peace as betraying marks of feebleness in all that concerns the dignity and the interests of the King; . . . and we cannot excuse its neglect of the royalists, whose interests are entirely set aside in the preliminaries. Men are especially astonished at England's retrocession of Martinique without a single stipulation for the colonists there, who are at the mercy of a government as rapacious as it is fickle. All the owners of colonial property are very uneasy, and do not hide their annoyance against England on this score."[1]

This interesting report gives a glimpse into the real thought of Paris such as is rarely afforded by the tamed or venal Press. As Bonaparte's spies enabled him to feel every throb of the French pulse, he must at once have seen how great was the prestige which he gained by

[1] "F. O.," France, No. 59.

these first diplomatic successes, and how precarious was the foothold of the English Ministers on the slippery grade of concession to which they had been lured. Addington surely should have remembered that only the strong man can with safety recede at the outset, and that an act of concession which, coming from a master mind, is interpreted as one of noble magnanimity, will be scornfully snatched from a nerveless hand as a sign of timorous complaisance. But the public statements and the secret avowals of our leaders show that they wished "to try the experiment of peace," now that France had returned to ordinary political conditions and Jacobinism was curbed by Bonaparte. "Perhaps," wrote Castlereagh, "France, satisfied with her recent acquisitions, will find her interest in that system of internal improvement which is necessarily connected with peace."[1] There is no reason for doubting the sincerity of this statement. Our policy was distinctly and continuously complaisant: France regained her colonies: she was not required to withdraw from Switzerland and Holland. Who could expect, from what was then known of Bonaparte's character, that a peace so fraught with glory and profit would not satisfy French honour and his own ambition?

Peace, then, was an "experiment." The British Government wished to see whether France would turn from revolution and war to agriculture and commerce, whether her young ruler be satisfied with a position of grandeur and solid power such as Louis XIV. had rarely enjoyed. Alas! the failure of the experiment was patent to all save the blandest optimists long before the Preliminaries of London took form in the definitive Treaty of Amiens. Bonaparte's aim now was to keep our Government strictly to the provisional terms of peace which it had imprudently signed. Even before the negotiations were opened at Amiens, he ordered Joseph Bonaparte to listen to no proposal concerning the King of Sardinia and the ex-Stadholder of Holland,

[1] Castlereagh, "Letters and Despatches," Second Series, vol. i., p. 62, and the speeches of Ministers on November 3rd, 1801.

and asserted that the "internal affairs of the Batavian Republic, of Germany, of Helvetia, and of the Italian Republics" were "absolutely alien to the discussions with England." This implied that England was to be shut out from Continental politics, and that France was to regulate the affairs of central and southern Europe. This observance of the letter was, however, less rigid where French colonial and maritime interests were at stake. Dextrous feelers were put forth seawards, and it was only when these were repulsed that the French negotiators encased themselves in their preliminaries.

The task of reducing those articles to a definitive treaty devolved, on the British side, on the Marquis Cornwallis, a gouty, world-weary old soldier, chiefly remembered for the surrender which ended the American War. Nevertheless, he had everywhere won respect for his personal probity in the administration of Indian affairs, and there must also have been some convincing qualities in a personality which drew from Napoleon at St. Helena the remark: "I do not believe that Cornwallis was a man of first-rate abilities: but he had talent, great probity, sincerity, and never broke his word. . . . He was a man of honour—a true Englishman."

Against Lord Cornwallis, and his far abler secretary, Mr. Merry, were pitted Joseph Bonaparte and his secretaries. The abilities of the eldest of the Bonapartes have been much underrated. Though he lacked the masterful force and wide powers of his second brother, yet at Lunéville Joseph proved himself to be an able diplomatist, and later on in his tenure of power at Naples and Madrid he displayed no small administrative gifts. Moreover, his tact and kindliness kindled in all who knew him a warmth of friendship such as Napoleon's sterner qualities rarely inspired. The one was loved as a man: for the other, even his earlier acquaintances felt admiration and devotion, but always mingled with a certain fear of the demi-god that would at times blaze forth. This was the dread personality that urged Talleyrand and Joseph Bonaparte to their utmost en-

deavours and steeled them against any untoward complaisance at Amiens.

The selection of so honourable a man as Cornwallis afforded no slight guarantee for the sincerity of our Government, and its sincerity will stand the test of a perusal of its despatches. Having examined all those that deal with these negotiations, the present writer can affirm that the official instructions were in no respect modified by the secret injunctions: these referred merely to such delicate and personal topics as the evacuation of Hanover by Prussian troops and the indemnities to be sought for the House of Orange and the House of Savoy. The circumstances of these two dispossessed dynasties were explained so as to show that the former Dutch Stadholder had a very strong claim on us, as well as on France and the Batavian Republic; while the championship of the House of Savoy by the Czar rendered the claims of that ancient family on the intervention of George III. less direct and personal than those of the Prince of Orange. Indeed, England would have insisted on the insertion of a clause to this effect in the preliminaries had not other arrangements been on foot at Berlin which promised to yield due compensation to this unfortunate prince. Doubtless the motives of the British Ministers were good, but their failure to insert such a clause fatally prejudiced their case all through the negotiations at Amiens.

The British official declaration respecting Malta was clear and practical. The island was to be restored to the Knights of the Order of St. John and placed under the protection of a third Power other than France and England. But the reconstitution of the Order was no less difficult than the choice of a strong and disinterested protecting Power. Lord Hawkesbury proposed that Russia be the guaranteeing Power. No proposal could have been more reasonable. The claims of the Czar to the protectorate of the Order had been so recently asserted by a treaty with the knights that no other conclusion seemed feasible. And, in order to assuage

the grievances of the islanders and strengthen the rule of the knights, the British Ministry desired that the natives of Malta should gain a foothold in the new constitution. The lack of civil and political rights had contributed so materially to the overthrow of the Order that no reconstruction of that shattered body could be deemed intelligent, or even honest, which did not cement its interests with those of the native Maltese. The First Consul, however, at once demurred to both these proposals. In the course of a long interview with Cornwallis at Paris,[1] he adverted to the danger of bringing Russia's maritime pressure to bear on Mediterranean questions, especially as her sovereigns "had of late shown themselves to be such unsteady politicians." This of course referred to the English proclivities of Alexander I., and it is clear that Bonaparte's annoyance with Alexander was the first unsettling influence which prevented the solution of the Maltese question. The First Consul also admitted to Cornwallis that the King of Naples, despite his ancient claims of suzerainty over Malta, could not be considered a satisfactory guarantor, as between two Great Powers; and he then proposed that the tangle should be cut by blowing up the fortifications of Valetta.

The mere suggestion of such an act affords eloquent proof of the difficulties besetting the whole question. To destroy works of vast extent, which were the bulwark of Christendom against the Barbary pirates, would practically have involved the handing over of Valetta to those pests of the Mediterranean; and from Malta as a new base of operations they could have spread devastation along the coasts of Sicily and Italy. This was the objection which Cornwallis at once offered to an other-

[1] Cornwallis, "Correspondence," vol. iii., despatch of December 3rd, 1801. The feelings of the native Maltese were strongly for annexation to Britain, and against the return of the Order at all. They sent a deputation to London (February, 1802), which was shabbily treated by our Government so as to avoid offending Bonaparte. (See "Correspondence of W. A. Miles," vol. ii., pp. 323-329, who drew up their memorial.)

wise specious proposal: he had recently received papers from Major-General Pigot at Malta, in which the same solution of the question was examined in detail. The British officer pointed out that the complete dismantling of the fortifications would expose the island, and therefore the coasts of Italy, to the rovers; yet he suggested a partial demolition, which seems to prove that the British officers in command at Malta did not contemplate the retention of the island and the infraction of the peace.

Our Government, however, disapproved of the destruction of the fortifications of Valetta as wounding the susceptibilities of the Czar, and as in no wise rendering impossible the seizure of the island and the reconstruction of those works by some future invader. In fact, as the British Ministry now aimed above all at maintaining good relations with the Czar, Bonaparte's proposal could only be regarded as an ingenious device for sundering the Anglo-Russian understanding. The French Minister at St. Petersburg was doing his utmost to prevent the *rapprochement* of the Czar to the Court of St James, and was striving to revive the moribund league of the Armed Neutrals. That last offer had "been rejected in the most peremptory manner and in terms almost bordering upon derision." Still there was reason to believe that the former Anglo-Russian disputes about Malta might be so far renewed as to bring Bonaparte and Alexander to an understanding. The sentimental Liberalism of the young Czar predisposed him towards a French alliance, and his whole disposition inclined him towards the brilliant opportunism of Paris rather than the frigid legitimacy of the Court of St. James. The Maltese affair and the possibility of re-opening the Eastern Question were the two sources of hope to the promoters of a Franco-Russian alliance; for both these questions appealed to the chivalrous love of adventure and to the calculating ambition so curiously blent in Alexander's nature. Such, then, was the motive which doubtless prompted Bonaparte's proposal concerning Valetta; such also were the reasons which certainly dictated its rejection by Great Britain.

VALETTA (from a contemporary engraving).

Entitled "A View of the City of Malta on the side of the Jesuits' Garden or of the Island of Marsa,"

In his interview with the First Consul at Paris, and in the subsequent negotiations at Amiens with Joseph Bonaparte, the question of Tobago and England's money claim for the support of French prisoners was found to be no less thorny than that of Malta. The Bonapartes firmly rejected the proposal for the retention of Tobago by England in lieu of her pecuniary demand. A Government which neglected to procure the insertion of its claim to Tobago among the Preliminaries of London could certainly not hope to regain that island in exchange for a concession to France that was in any degree disputable. But the two Bonapartes and Talleyrand now took their stand solely on the preliminaries, and politely waved on one side the earlier promises of M. Otto as unauthorized and invalid. They also closely scrutinized the British claim to an indemnity for the support of French prisoners. Though theoretically correct, it was open to an objection, which was urged by Bonaparte and Talleyrand with suave yet incisive irony. They suggested that the claim must be considered in relation to a counter-claim, soon to be sent from Paris, for the maintenance of all prisoners taken by the French from the various forces subsidized by Great Britain, a charge which "would probably not leave a balance so much in favour of His [Britannic] Majesty as His Government may have looked forward to." This retort was not so terrible as it appeared; for most of the papers necessary for the making up of the French counter-claim had been lost or destroyed during the Revolution. Yet the threat told with full effect on Cornwallis, who thereafter referred to the British claim as a "hopeless debt."[1] The officials of Downing Street drew a distinction between prisoners from armies merely subsidized by us and those taken from foreign forces actually under our control; but it is clear that Cornwallis ceased to press the claim. In fact, the British case was mismanaged from beginning to end: the accounts for the maintenance of French and Dutch prisoners were, in the first instance, wrongly drawn up; and there seems to have been little

[1] Cornwallis's despatches of January 10th and 23rd, 1802.

or no notion of the seriousness of the counter-claim, which came with all the effect of a volley from a masked battery, destructive alike to our diplomatic reputation and to our hope of retaining Tobago.

It is impossible to refer here to all the topics discussed at Amiens. The determination of the French Government to adopt a forward colonial and oceanic policy is clearly seen in its proposals made at the close of the year 1801. They were: (1) the abolition of salutes to the British flag on the high seas; (2) an *absolute* ownership of the eastern and western coasts of Newfoundland in return for a proposed cession of the isles of St. Pierre and Miquelon to us—which would have practically ceded to France *in full sovereignty* all the best fishing coasts of that land, with every prospect of settling the interior, in exchange for two islets devastated by war and then in British hands; (3) the right of the French to a share in the whale fishery in those seas; (4) the establishment of a French fishing station in the Falkland Isles; and (5) the extension of the French districts around the towns of Yanaon and Mahé in India.[1] To all these demands Lord Cornwallis opposed an unbending opposition. Weak as our policy had been on other affairs, it was firm as a rock on all maritime and Indian questions. In fact, the events to be described in the next chapter, which led to the consolidation of British power in Hindostan, would in all probability never have occurred but for the apprehensions excited by these French demands; and our masterful proconsul in Bengal, the Marquis Wellesley, could not have pursued his daring and expensive schemes of conquest, annexation, and forced alliances, had not the schemes of the First Consul played into the hands of the soldiers at Calcutta and weakened the protests of the dividend-hunters of Leadenhall Street.

The persistence of French demands for an increase of influence in Newfoundland and the West and East Indies, the vastness of her expedition to Saint Domingo

[1] Project of a treaty forwarded by Cornwallis to London on December 27th, 1801, in the Public Record Office, No. 615.

and the thinly-veiled designs of her Australian expedition (which we shall notice in the next chapter), all served to awaken the suspicions of the British Government. The negotiations consequently progressed but slowly. From the outset they were clogged by the suspicion of bad faith. Spain and Holland, smarting under the conditions of a peace which gave to France all the glory and to her allies all the loss, delayed sending their respective envoys to the conferences at Amiens, and finally avowed their determination to resist the surrender of Trinidad and Ceylon. In fact, pressure had to be exerted from Paris and London before they yielded to the inevitable. This difficulty was only one of several: there then remained the questions whether Portugal and Turkey should be admitted to share in the treaty, as England demanded; or whether they should sign a separate peace with France. The First Consul strenuously insisted on the exclusion of those States, though their interests were vitally affected by the present negotiations. He saw that a separate treaty with the Sublime Porte would enable him, not only to extract valuable trading concessions in the Black Sea trade, but also to cement a good understanding with Russia on the Eastern Question, which was now being adroitly reopened by French diplomacy. Against the exclusion of Turkey from the negotiations at Amiens, Great Britain firmly but vainly protested. In fact, Talleyrand had bound the Porte to a separate agreement which promised everything for France and nothing for Turkey, and seemed to doom the Sublime Porte to certain humiliation and probable partition.[1]

Then there were the vexed questions of the indemnities claimed by George III. for the Houses of Orange and of Savoy. In his interview with Cornwallis, Bonaparte had effusively promised to do his utmost for the

[1] See the "Paget Papers," vol. ii. France gained the right of admission to the Black Sea: the despatches of Mr. Merry from Paris in May, 1802, show that France and Russia were planning schemes of partition of Turkey. ("F. O.," France, No. 62.)

ex-Stadholder, though he refused to consider the case of the King of Sardinia, who, he averred, had offended him by appealing to the Czar. The territorial interests of France in Italy doubtless offered a more potent argument to the First Consul: after practically annexing Piedmont and dominating the peninsula, he could ill brook the presence on the mainland of a king whom he had already sacrificed to his astute and masterful policy. The case of the Prince of Orange was different. He was a victim to the triumph of French and democratic influence in the Dutch Netherlands. George III. felt a deep interest in this unfortunate prince and made a strong appeal to the better instincts of Bonaparte on his behalf. Indeed, it is probable that England had acquiesced in the consolidation of French influence at the Hague, in the hope that her complaisance would lead the First Consul to assure him some position worthy of so ancient a House. But though Cornwallis pressed the Batavian Republic on behalf of its exiled chief, yet the question was finally adjourned by the XVIIIth clause of the definitive Treaty of Amiens; and the scion of that famous House had to take his share in the forthcoming scramble for the clerical domains of Germany.[1]

For the still more difficult cause of the House of Savoy the British Government made honest but unavailing efforts, firmly refusing to recognize the newest creations of Bonaparte in Italy, namely, the Kingdom of Etruria and the Ligurian Republic, until he indemnified the House of Savoy. Our recognition was withheld for the reasons that prompt every bargainer to refuse satisfaction to his antagonist until an equal concession is accorded. This game was played by both Powers at Amiens, and with little other result than mutual exasperation. Yet

[1] The despatches of March 14th and 22nd, 1802, show how strong was the repugnance of our Government to this shabby treatment of the Prince of Orange; and it is clear that Cornwallis exceeded his instructions in signing peace on those terms. (See Garden, vol. vii., p. 142.) By a secret treaty with Prussia (May, 1802), France procured Fulda for the House of Orange.

here, too, the balance of gain naturally accrued to Bonaparte; for he required the British Ministry to recognize existing facts in Etruria and Liguria, while Cornwallis had to champion the cause of exiles and of an order that seemed for ever to have vanished. To pit the non-existent against the actual was a task far above the powers of British statesmanship; yet that was to be its task for the next decade, while the forces of the living present were to be wielded by its mighty antagonist. Herein lay the secret of British failures and of Napoleon's extraordinary triumphs.

Leaving, for a space, the negotiations at Amiens, we turn to consider the events which transpired at Lyons in the early weeks of 1802, events which influenced not only the future of Italy, but the fortunes of Bonaparte.

It will be remembered that, after the French victories of Marengo and Hohenlinden, Austria agreed to terms of peace whereby the Cisalpine, Ligurian, Helvetic, and Batavian Republics were formally recognized by her, though a clause expressly stipulated that they were to be independent of France. A vain hope! They continued to be under French tutelage, and their strongholds in the possession of French troops.

It now remained to legalize French supremacy in the Cisalpine Republic, which comprised the land between the Ticino and the Adige, and the Alps and the Rubicon. The new State received a provisional form of government after Marengo, a small council being appointed to supervise civil affairs at the capital, Milan. With it and with Marescalchi, the Cisalpine envoy at Paris, Bonaparte had concerted a constitution, or rather he had used these men as a convenient screen to hide its purely personal origin. Having, for form's sake, consulted the men whom he had himself appointed, he now suggested that the chief citizens of that republic should confer with him respecting their new institutions. His Minister at Milan thereupon proposed that they should cross the Alps for that purpose, assembling, not at Paris, where their dependence on the First Consul's will might provoke too

much comment, but at Lyons. To that city, accordingly, there repaired some 450 of the chief men of Northern Italy, who braved the snows of a most rigorous December, in the hope of consolidating the liberties of their long-distracted country. And thus was seen the strange spectacle of the organization of Lombardy, Modena, and the Legations being effected in one provincial centre of France, while at another of her cities the peace of Europe and the fortunes of two colonial empires were likewise at stake. Such a conjunction of events might well impress the imagination of men, bending the stubborn will of the northern islanders, and moulding the Italian notables to complete complaisance. And yet, such power was there in the nascent idea of Italian nationality, that Bonaparte's proposals, which, in his absence, were skilfully set forth by Talleyrand, met with more than one rebuff from the Consulta at Lyons.

Bitterly it opposed the declaration that the Roman Catholic religion was the religion of the Cisalpine Republic and must be maintained by a State budget. Only the first part of this proposal could be carried: so keen was the opposition to the second part that, as a preferable plan, property was set apart for the support of the clergy; and clerical discipline was subjected to the State, on terms somewhat similar to those of the French Concordat.[1]

Secular affairs gave less trouble. The apparent success of the French constitution furnished a strong motive for adopting one of a similar character for the Italian State; and as the proposed institutions had been approved at Milan, their acceptance by a large and miscellaneous body was a foregone conclusion. Talleyrand also took the most unscrupulous care that the affair of the Presidency should be judiciously settled. On December 31st, 1801, he writes to Bonaparte from Lyons:

"The opinion of the Cisalpines seems not at all decided as to the choice to be made: they will gladly receive the man

[1] Pasolini, "Memorie," *ad init.*

whom you nominate: a President in France and a Vice-President at Milan would suit a large number of them."

Four days later he confidently assures the First Consul:

"They will do what you want without your needing even to show your desire. What they think you desire will immediately become law."[1]

The ground having been thus thoroughly worked, Bonaparte and Josephine, accompanied by a brilliant suite, arrived at Lyons on January 11th, and met with an enthusiastic reception. Despite the intense cold, followed by a sudden thaw, a brilliant series of fêtes, parades, and receptions took place; and several battalions of the French Army of Egypt, which had recently been conveyed home on English ships, now passed in review before their chief. The impressionable Italians could not mistake the aim of these demonstrations; and, after general matters had been arranged by the notables, the final measures were relegated to a committee of thirty. The desirability of this step was obvious, for urgent protests had already been raised in the Consulta against the appointment of a foreigner as President of the new State. When a hubbub arose on this burning topic:

"Some officers of the regiments in garrison at Lyons appeared in the hall and imposed silence upon all parties. Notwithstanding this, Count Melzi was actually chosen President by the majority of the Committee of Thirty; but he declined the honour, and suggested in significant terms that, to enable him to render any service to the country, the committee had better fix upon General Bonaparte as their Chief Magistrate. This being done, Bonaparte immediately appointed Count Melzi Vice-President."[2]

Bonaparte's determination to fill this important posi-

[1] "Lettres inédites de Talleyrand à Napoléon" (Paris, 1889).

[2] Mr. Jackson's despatch of February 17th, 1802, from Paris. According to Miot de Melito ("Mems.," ch. xiv.), Bonaparte had offered the post of President to his brother Joseph, but fettered it by so many restrictions that Joseph declined the honour.

tion is clearly seen in his correspondence. On the 2nd and 4th of Pluviôse (January 22nd and 24th), he writes from Lyons:

"All the principal affairs of the Consulta are settled. I count on being back at Paris in the course of the decade."

"To-morrow I shall review the troops from Egypt. On the 6th [of Pluviôse] all the business of the Consulta will be finished, and I shall probably set out on my journey on the 7th."

The next day, 5th Pluviôse, sees the accomplishment of his desires:

"To-day I have reviewed the troops on the Place Bellecour; the sun shone as it does in Floréal. The Consulta has named a committee of thirty individuals, which has reported to it that, considering the domestic and foreign affairs of the Cisalpine, it was indispensable to let me discharge the first magistracy, until circumstances permit and I judge it suitable to appoint a successor."

These extracts prove that the acts of the Consulta could be planned beforehand no less precisely than the movements of the soldiery, and that even so complex a matter as the voting of a constitution and the choice of its chief had to fall in with the arrangements of this methodizing genius. Certainly civilization had progressed since the weary years when the French people groped through mists and waded in blood in order to gain a perfect polity: that precious boon was now conferred on a neighbouring people in so sure a way that the plans of their benefactor could be infallibly fixed and his return to Paris calculated to the hour.

The final address uttered by Bonaparte to the Italian notables is remarkable for the short, sharp sentences, which recall the tones of the parade ground. Passing recent events in rapid review, he said, speaking in his mother tongue:

". . . Every effort had been made to dismember you: the protection of France won the day: you have been recognized

at Lunéville. One-fifth larger than before, you are now more powerful, more consolidated, and have wider hopes. Composed of six different nations, you will be now united under a constitution the best possible for your social and material condition. . . . The selections I have made for your chief offices have been made independently of all idea of party or feeling of locality. As for that of President, I have found no one among you with sufficient claims on public opinion, sufficiently free from local feelings, and who had rendered great enough services to his country, to intrust it to him. . . . Your people has only local feelings: it must now rise to national feelings."

In accordance with this last grand and prophetic remark, the name Italian was substituted for that of Cisalpine: and thus, for the first time since the Middle Ages, there reappeared on the map of Europe that name, which was to evoke the sneers of diplomatists and the most exalted patriotism of the century. If Bonaparte had done naught else, he would deserve immortal glory for training the divided peoples of the peninsula for a life of united activity.

The new constitution was modelled on that of France; but the pretence of a democratic suffrage was abandoned. The right of voting was accorded to three classes, the great proprietors, the clerics and learned men, and the merchants. These, meeting in their several "Electoral Colleges," voted for the members of the legislative bodies; a Tribunal was also charged with the maintenance of the constitution. By these means Bonaparte endeavoured to fetter the power of the reactionaries no less than the anti-clerical fervour of the Italian Jacobins. The blending of the new and the old which then began shows the hand of the master builder, who neither sweeps away materials merely because they are old, nor rejects the strength that comes from improved methods of construction: and, however much we may question the disinterestedness of his motives in this great enterprise, there can be but one opinion as to the skill of the methods and the beneficence of the results in Italy.[1]

[1] Roederer tells us ("Œuvres," vol. iii., p. 428) that he had

The first step in the process of Italian unification had now been taken at Lyons. A second soon followed. The affairs of the Ligurian Republic were in some confusion; and an address came from Genoa begging that their differences might be composed by the First Consul. The spontaneity of this offer may well be questioned, seeing that Bonaparte found it desirable, in his letter of February 18th, 1802, to assure the Ligurian authorities that they need feel no disquietude as to the independence of their republic. Bonaparte undertook to alter their constitution and nominate their Doge.

That the news of the events at Lyons excited the liveliest indignation in London is evident from Hawkesbury's despatch of February 12th, 1802, to Cornwallis:

"The proceedings at Lyons have created the greatest alarm in this country, and there are many persons who were pacifically disposed, who since this event are desirous of renewing the war. It is impossible to be surprised at this feeling when we consider the inordinate ambition, the gross breach of faith, and the inclination to insult Europe manifested by the First Consul on this occasion. The Government here are desirous of avoiding to take notice of these proceedings, and are sincerely desirous to conclude the peace, if it can be obtained on terms consistent with our honour."

Why the Government should have lagged behind the far surer instincts of English public opinion it is difficult to say. Hawkesbury's despatch of four days later supplies an excuse for his contemptible device of pretending not to see this glaring violation of the Treaty of Lunéville. Referring to the events at Lyons, he writes:

"Extravagant and unjustifiable as they are in themselves, [they] must have led us to believe that the First Consul would

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drawn up two plans of a constitution for the Cisalpine; the one very short and leaving much to the President, the other precise and detailed. He told Talleyrand to advise Bonaparte to adopt the former as it was "*short and*"—he was about to add "*clear*" when the diplomatist cut him short with the words, "*Yes: short and obscure!*"

have been more anxious than ever to have closed his account with this country."

Doubtless that was the case, but only on condition that England remained passive while French domination was extended over all neighbouring lands. If our Ministers believed that Bonaparte feared the displeasure of Austria, they were completely in error. Thanks to the utter weakness of the European system, and the rivalry of Austria and Prussia, he was now able to concentrate his ever-increasing power and prestige on the negotiations at Amiens, which once more claim our attention.

Far from being sated by the prestige gained at Lyons, he seemed to grow more exacting with victory. Moreover, he had been cut to the quick by some foolish articles of a French *émigré* named Peltier, in a paper published at London: instead of treating them with the contempt they deserved, he magnified these ravings of a disappointed exile into an event of high policy, and fulminated against the Government which allowed them. In vain did Cornwallis object that the Addington Cabinet could not venture on the unpopular act of curbing freedom of the Press in Great Britain. The First Consul, who had experienced no such difficulty in France, persisted now, as a year later, in considering every uncomplimentary reference to himself as an indirect and semi-official attack.

To these causes we may attribute the French demands of February 4th: contradicting his earlier proposal for a temporary Neapolitan garrison of Malta, Bonaparte now absolutely refused either to grant that necessary protection to the weak Order of St. John, or to join Great Britain in an equal share of the expenses—£20,000 a year—which such a garrison would entail. The astonishment and indignation aroused at Downing Street nearly led to an immediate rupture of the negotiations; and it needed all the patience of Cornwallis and the suavity of Joseph Bonaparte to smooth away the asperities caused by Napoleon's direct intervention. It needs only a

slight acquaintance with the First Consul's methods of thought and expression to recognize in the Protocol of February 4th the incisive speech of an autocrat confident in his newly-consolidated powers and irritated by the gibes of Peltier.[1]

The good sense of the two plenipotentiaries at Amiens before long effected a reconciliation. Hawkesbury, writing from Downing Street, warned Cornwallis that if a rupture were to take place it must not be owing to "any impatience on our part": and he, in his turn, affably inquired from Joseph Bonaparte whether he had any more practicable plan than that of a Neapolitan garrison, which he had himself proposed. No plan was forthcoming other than that of a garrison of 1,000 Swiss mercenaries; and as this was open to grave objections, the original proposal was finally restored. On its side, the Court of St. James still refused to blow up the fortifications at Valetta; and rather than destroy those works, England had already offered that the independence of Malta should be guaranteed by the Great Powers—Great Britain, France, Austria, Russia, Spain, and Prussia: to this arrangement France soon assented. Later on we demanded that the Neapolitan garrison should remain in Malta for three years after the evacuation of the island by the British troops; whereas France desired to limit the period to one year. To this Cornwallis finally assented, with the proviso that, "if the Order of St. John shall not have raised a sufficient number of men, the Neapolitan troops shall remain until they shall be relieved by an adequate force, to be agreed upon by the guaranteeing Powers." The question of the garrison having been arranged, other details gave less trouble, and the Maltese question was settled in the thirteen conditions added to Clause X. of the definitive treaty.

Though this complex question was thus adjusted by March 17th, other matters delayed a settlement. Hawkes-

[1] Napoleon's letter of February 2nd, 1802, to Joseph Bonaparte; see too Cornwallis's memorandum of February 18th.

bury still demanded a definite indemnity for the Prince of Orange, but Cornwallis finally assented to Article XVIII. of the treaty, which vaguely promised "an adequate compensation." Cornwallis also persuaded his chief to waive his claims for the direct participation of Turkey in the treaty. The British demand for an indemnity for the expense of supporting French prisoners was to be relegated to commissioners—who never met. Indeed, this was the only polite way of escaping from the untenable position which our Government had heedlessly taken upon this topic.

It is clear from the concluding despatches of Cornwallis that he was wheedled by Joseph Bonaparte into conceding more than the British Government had empowered him to do; and, though the "secret and most confidential" despatch of March 22nd cautioned him against narrowing too much the ground of a rupture, if a rupture should still occur, yet three days later, and *after the receipt of this despatch*, he signed the terms of peace with Joseph Bonaparte, and two days later with the other signatory Powers.[1] It may well be doubted whether peace would ever have been signed but for the skill of Joseph Bonaparte in polite cajolery and the determination of Cornwallis to arrive at an understanding. In any case the final act of signature was distinctly the act, not of the British Government, but of its plenipo-

[1] It is only fair to Cornwallis to quote the letter, marked "Private," which he received from Hawkesbury at the same time that he was bidden to stand firm:

"DOWNING STREET, *March 22nd*, 1802.

"I think it right to inform you that I have had a confidential communication with Otto, who will use his utmost endeavours to induce his Government to agree to the articles respecting the Prince of Orange and the prisoners in the shape in which they are now proposed. I have very little doubt of his success, and I should hope therefore that you will soon be released. I need not remind you of the importance of sending your most expeditious messenger the moment our fate is determined. The Treasury is almost exhausted, and Mr. Addington cannot well make his loan in the present state of uncertainty."

tentiary. That fact is confirmed by his admission, on March 28th, that he had yielded where he was ordered to remain inflexible. At St. Helena, Napoleon also averred that after Cornwallis had definitely pledged himself to sign the treaty as it stood on the night of March 24th, he received instructions in a contrary sense from Downing Street; that nevertheless he held himself bound by his promise and signed the treaty on the following day, observing that his Government, if dissatisfied, might refuse to ratify it, but that, having pledged his word, he felt bound to abide by it. This story seems consonant with the whole behaviour of Cornwallis, so creditable to him as a man, so damaging to him as a diplomatist. The later events of the negotiation aroused much annoyance at Downing Street, and the conduct of Cornwallis met with chilling disapproval.

The First Consul, on the other hand, showed his appreciation of his brother's skill with unusual warmth; for when they appeared together at the opera in Paris, he affectionately thrust his elder brother to the front of the State box to receive the plaudits of the audience at the advent of a definite peace. That was surely the purest and noblest joy which the brothers ever tasted.

With what feelings of pride, not unmixed with awe, must the brothers have surveyed their career. Less than nine years had elapsed since their family fled from Corsica, and landed on the coast of Provence, apparently as bankrupt in their political hopes as in their material fortunes. Thrice did the fickle goddess cast Napoleon to the ground in the first two years of his new life, only that his wondrous gifts and sublime self-confidence might tower aloft the more conspicuously, bewildering alike the malcontents of Paris, the generals of the old Empire, the peoples of the Levant, and the statesmen of Britain. Of all these triumphs assuredly the last was not the least. The Peace of Amiens left France the arbitress of Europe, and, by restoring to her all her lost colonies, it promised to place her in the van of the oceanic and colonizing peoples.

CHAPTER XV

A FRENCH COLONIAL EMPIRE

ST. DOMINGO—LOUISIANA—INDIA—AUSTRALIA

"Il n'y a rien dans l'histoire du monde de comparable aux forces navales de l'Angleterre, à l'étendue et à la richesse de son commerce, à la masse de ses dettes, de ses défenses, de ses moyens, et à la fragilité des bases sur lesquelles repose l'édifice immense de sa fortune."—BARON MALOUET, *Considérations historiques sur l'Empire de la Mer.*

THERE are abundant reasons for thinking that Napoleon valued the Peace of Amiens as a necessary preliminary to the restoration of the French Colonial Empire. A comparison of the dates at which he set on foot his oceanic schemes will show that they nearly all had their inception in the closing months of 1801 and in the course of the following year. The sole important exceptions were the politico-scientific expedition to Australia, the ostensible purpose of which insured immunity from the attacks of English cruisers even in the year 1800, and the plans for securing French supremacy in Egypt, which had been frustrated in 1801 and were, to all appearance, abandoned by the First Consul according to the provisions of the Treaty of Amiens. The question whether he really relinquished his designs on Egypt is so intimately connected with the rupture of the Peace of Amiens that it will be more fitly considered in the following chapter. It may not, however, be out of place to offer some proofs as to the value which Bonaparte set on the valley of the Nile and the Isthmus of Suez. A letter from a spy at Paris, preserved in the

archives of our Foreign Office, and dated July 10th, 1801, contains the following significant statement with reference to Bonaparte: "Egypt, which is considered here as lost to France, is the only object which interests his personal ambition and excites his revenge." Even at the end of his days, he thought longingly of the land of the Pharaohs. In his first interview with the governor of St. Helena, the illustrious exile said emphatically: "Egypt is the most important country in the world." The words reveal a keen perception of all the influences conducive to commercial prosperity and imperial greatness. Egypt, in fact, with the Suez Canal, which his imagination always pictured as a necessary adjunct, was to be the keystone of that arch of empire which was to span the oceans and link the prairies of the far west to the teeming plains of India and the far Austral Isles.

The motives which impelled Napoleon to the enterprises now to be considered were as many-sided as the maritime ventures themselves. Ultimately, doubtless, they arose out of a love of vast undertakings that ministered at once to an expanding ambition and to that need of arduous administrative toils for which his mind ever craved in the heyday of its activity. And, while satiating the grinding powers of his otherwise morbidly restless spirit, these enterprises also fed and soothed those imperious, if unconscious, instincts which prompt every able man of inquiring mind to reclaim all possible domains from the unknown or the chaotic. As Egypt had, for the present at least, been reft from his grasp, he turned naturally to all other lands that could be forced to yield their secrets to the inquirer, or their comforts to the benefactors of mankind. Only a dull cynicism can deny this motive to the man who first unlocked the doors of Egyptian civilization; and it would be equally futile to deny to him the same beneficent aims with regard to the settlement of the plains of the Mississippi, and the coasts of New Holland.

The peculiarities of the condition of France furnished another powerful impulse towards colonization. In the

last decade her people had suffered from an excess of mental activity and nervous excitement. From philosophical and political speculation they must be brought back to the practical and prosaic; and what influence could be so healthy as the turning up of new soil and other processes that satisfy the primitive instincts? Some of these, it was true, were being met by the increasing peasant proprietary in France herself. But this internal development, salutary as it was, could not appease the restless spirits of the towns or the ambition of the soldiery. Foreign adventures and oceanic commerce alone could satisfy the Parisians and open up new careers for the Prætorian chiefs, whom the First Consul alone really feared.

Nor were these sentiments felt by him alone. In a paper which Talleyrand read to the Institute of France in July, 1797, that far-seeing statesman had dwelt upon the pacifying influences exerted by foreign commerce and colonial settlements on a too introspective nation. His words bear witness to the keenness of his insight into the maladies of his own people and the sources of social and political strength enjoyed by the United States, where he had recently sojourned. Referring to their speedy recovery from the tumults of their revolution, he said: "The true Lethe after passing through a revolution is to be found in the opening out to men of every avenue of hope.—Revolutions leave behind them a general restlessness of mind, a need of movement." That need was met in America by man's warfare against the forest, the flood, and the prairie. France must therefore possess colonies as intellectual and political safety-valves; and in his graceful, airy style he touched on the advantages offered by Egypt, Louisiana, and West Africa, both for their intrinsic value and as opening the door of work and of hope to a brain-sick generation.

Following up this clue, Bonaparte, at a somewhat later date, remarked the tendency of the French people, now that the revolutionary strifes were past, to settle down contentedly on their own little plots; and he

emphasized the need of a colonial policy such as would widen the national life. The remark has been largely justified by events; and doubtless he discerned in the agrarian reforms of the Revolution an influence unfavourable to that racial dispersion which, under wise guidance, builds up an oceanic empire. The grievances of the *ancien régime* had helped to scatter on the shores of the St. Lawrence the seeds of a possible New France. Primogeniture was ever driving from England her younger sons to found New Englands and expand the commerce of the motherland. Let not France now rest at home, content with her perfect laws and with the conquest of her "natural frontiers." Let her rather strive to regain the first place in colonial activity which the follies of Louis XV. and the secular jealousy of Albion had filched from her. In the effort she would extend the bounds of civilization, lay the ghost of Jacobinism, satisfy military and naval adventures, and unconsciously revert to the ideas and governmental methods of the age of *le grand monarque*.

The French possessions beyond the seas had never shrunk to a smaller area than in the closing years of the late war with England. The fact was confessed by the First Consul in his letter of October 7th, 1801, to Decrès, the Minister for the Navy and the Colonies: "Our possessions beyond the sea, which are now in our power, are limited to Saint Domingo, Guadeloupe, the Isle of France (Mauritius), the Isle of Bourbon, Senegal, and Guiana." After rendering this involuntary homage to the prowess of the British navy, Bonaparte proceeded to describe the first measures for the organization of these colonies: for not until March 25th, 1802, when the definitive treaty of peace was signed, could the others be regained by France.

First in importance came the re-establishment of French authority in the large and fertile island of Hayti, or St. Domingo. It needs an effort of the imagination for the modern reader to realize the immense import-

ance of the West Indian islands at the beginning of the century, whose close found them depressed and half bankrupt. At the earlier date, when the name Australia was unknown, and the half-starved settlement in and around Sydney represented the sole wealth of that isle of continent; when the Cape of Good Hope was looked on only as a port of call; when the United States numbered less than five and a half million souls, and the waters of the Mississippi rolled in unsullied majesty past a few petty Spanish stations—the plantations of the West Indies seemed the unfailing mine of colonial industry and commerce. Under the *ancien régime*, the trade of the French portion of San Domingo is reported to have represented more than half of her oceanic commerce. But during the Revolution the prosperity of that colony reeled under a terrible blow.

The hasty proclamation of equality between whites and blacks by the French revolutionists, and the refusal of the planters to recognize that decree as binding, led to a terrible servile revolt, which desolated the whole of the colony. Those merciless strifes had, however, somewhat abated under the organizing power of a man, in whom the black race seemed to have vindicated its claims to political capacity. Toussaint l'Ouverture had come to the front by sheer sagacity and force of character. By a deft mixture of force and clemency, he imposed order on the vapouring crowds of negroes: he restored the French part of the island to comparative order and prosperity; and with an army of 20,000 men he occupied the Spanish portion. In this, as in other matters, he appeared to act as the mandatory of France; but he looked to the time when France, beset by European wars, would tacitly acknowledge his independence. In May, 1801, he made a constitution for the island, and declared himself governor for life, with power to appoint his successor. This mimicry of the consular office, and the open vaunt that he was the "Bonaparte of the Antilles," incensed Bonaparte; and the haste with which, on the day after the Preliminaries of London, he pre-

pared to overthrow this contemptible rival, tells its own tale.

Yet Corsican hatred was tempered with Corsican guile. Toussaint had requested that the Haytians should be under the protection of their former mistress. Protection was the last thing that Bonaparte desired; but he deemed it politic to flatter the black chieftain with assurances of his personal esteem and gratitude for the "great services which you have rendered to the French people. If its flag floats over St. Domingo it is due to you and your brave blacks"—a reference to Toussaint's successful resistance to English attempts at landing. There were, it is true, some points in the new Haytian constitution which contravened the sovereign rights of France, but these were pardonable in the difficult circumstances which had pressed on Toussaint: he was now, however, invited to amend them so as to recognize the complete sovereignty of the motherland and the authority of General Leclerc, whom Bonaparte sent out as captain-general of the island. To this officer, the husband of Pauline Bonaparte, the First Consul wrote on the same day that there was reported to be much ferment in the island against Toussaint, that the obstacles to be overcome would therefore be much less formidable than had been feared, provided that activity and firmness were used. In his references to the burning topic of slavery, the First Consul showed a similar reserve. The French Republic having abolished it, he could not, as yet, openly restore an institution flagrantly opposed to the Rights of Man. Ostensibly therefore he figured as the champion of emancipation, assuring the Haytians in his proclamation of November 8th, 1801, that they were all free and all equal in the sight of God and of the French Republic: "If you are told, 'These forces are destined to snatch your liberty from you,' reply, 'The Republic has given us our liberty: it will not allow it to be taken from us.'" Of a similar tenor was his public declaration a fortnight later, that at St. Domingo and Guadeloupe everybody was free and

would remain free. Very different were his private instructions. On the last day of October he ordered Talleyrand to write to the British Government, asking for their help in supplying provisions from Jamaica to this expedition destined to "destroy the new Algiers being organized in American waters"; and a fortnight later he charged him to state his resolve to destroy the government of the blacks at St. Domingo; that if he had to postpone the expedition for a year, he would be "obliged to constitute the blacks as French"; and that "the liberty of the blacks, if recognized by the Government, would always be a support for the Republic in the New World." As he was striving to cajole our Government into supporting his expedition, it is clear that in the last enigmatic phrase he was bidding for that support by the hint of a prospective restoration of slavery at St. Domingo. A comparison of his public and private statements must have produced a curious effect on the British Ministers, and many of the difficulties during the negotiations at Amiens doubtless sprang out of their knowledge of his double-dealing in the West Indies.

The means at the First Consul's disposal might have been considered sufficient to dispense with these paltry devices; for when the squadrons of Brest, Lorient, Rochefort, and Toulon had joined their forces, they mustered thirty-two ships of the line and thirty-one frigates, with more than 20,000 troops on board. So great, indeed, was the force as to occasion strong remonstrances from the British Government, and a warning that a proportionately strong fleet would be sent to watch over the safety of our West Indies.[1] The size of the French armada and the warnings which Toussaint received from Europe induced that wily dictator to adopt stringent precautionary measures. He persuaded

[1] See the British notes of November 6th-16th, 1801, in the "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. iii. In his speech in the House of Lords, May 13th, 1802, Lord Grenville complained that we had had to send to the West Indies in time of peace a fleet double as large as that kept there during the late war.

the blacks that the French were about to enslave them once more, and, raising the spectre of bondage, he quelled sedition, ravaged the maritime towns, and awaited the French in the interior, in confident expectation that yellow fever would winnow their ranks and reduce them to a level with his own strength.

His hopes were ultimately realized, but not until he himself succumbed to the hardihood of the French attack. Leclerc's army swept across the desolated belt with an ardour that was redoubled by the sight of the mangled remains of white people strewn amidst the negro encampments, and stormed Toussaint's chief stronghold at Crête-à-Pierrot. The dictator and his factious lieutenants thereupon surrendered (May 8th, 1802), on condition of their official rank being respected —a stipulation which both sides must have regarded as unreal and impossible. The French then pressed on to secure the subjection of the whole island before the advent of the unhealthy season, which Toussaint eagerly awaited. It now set in with unusual virulence; and in a few days the conquerors found their force reduced to 12,000 effectives. Suspecting Toussaint's designs, Leclerc seized him. He was empowered to do so by Bonaparte's orders of March 16th, 1802:

"Follow your instructions exactly, and as soon as you have done with Toussaint, Christopher, Dessalines, and the chief brigands, and the masses of the blacks are disarmed, send to the continent all the blacks and the half-castes who have taken part in the civil troubles."

Toussaint was hurried off to France, where he died a year later from the hardships to which he was exposed at the fort of Joux among the Juras.

Long before the cold of a French winter claimed the life of Toussaint, his antagonist fell a victim to the sweltering heats of the tropics. On November 2nd, 1802, Leclerc succumbed to the unhealthy climate and to his ceaseless anxieties. In the Notes dictated at St. Helena, Napoleon submitted Leclerc's memory to

some strictures for his indiscretion in regard to the proposed restoration of slavery. The official letters of that officer expose the injustice of the charge. The facts are these. After the seeming submission of St. Domingo, the First Consul caused a decree to be secretly passed at Paris (May 20th, 1802), which prepared to re-establish slavery in the West Indies; but Decrès warned Leclerc that it was not for the present to be applied to St. Domingo unless it seemed to be opportune. Knowing how fatal any such proclamation would be, Leclerc suppressed the decree; but General Richepanse, who was now governor of the island of Guadeloupe, not only issued the decree, but proceeded to enforce it with rigour. It was this which caused the last and most desperate revolts of the blacks, fatal alike to French domination and to Leclerc's life. His successor, Rochambeau, in spite of strong reinforcements of troops from France and a policy of the utmost rigour, succeeded no better. In the island of Guadeloupe the rebels openly defied the authority of France; and, on the renewal of war between England and France, the remains of the expedition were for the most part constrained to surrender to the British flag or to the insurgent blacks. The island recovered its so-called independence; and the sole result of Napoleon's efforts in this sphere was the loss of more than twenty generals and some 30,000 troops.

The assertion has been repeatedly made that the First Consul told off for this service the troops of the Army of the Rhine, with the aim of exposing to the risks of tropical life the most republican part of the French forces. That these furnished a large part of the expeditionary force cannot be denied; but if his design was to rid himself of political foes, it is difficult to see why he should not have selected Moreau, Masséna, or Augereau, rather than Leclerc. The fact that his brother-in-law was accompanied by his wife, Pauline Bonaparte, for whom venomous tongues asserted that Napoleon cherished a more than brotherly affection,

will suffice to refute the slander. Finally, it may be remarked that Bonaparte had not hesitated to subject the choicest part of his Army of Italy and his own special friends to similiar risks in Egypt and Syria. He never hesitated to sacrifice thousands of lives when a great object was at stake; and the restoration of the French West Indian Colonies might well seem worth an army, especially as St. Domingo was not only of immense instrinsic value to France in days when beetroot sugar was unknown, but was of strategic importance as a base of operations for the vast colonial empire which the First Consul proposed to rebuild in the basin of the Mississippi.

The history of the French possessions on the North American continent could scarcely be recalled by ardent patriots without pangs of remorse. The name Louisiana, applied to a vast territory stretching up the banks of the Mississippi and the Missouri, recalled the glorious days of Louis XIV., when the French flag was borne by stout *voyageurs* up the foaming rivers of Canada and the placid reaches of the father of rivers. It had been the ambition of Montcalm to connect the French stations on Lake Erie with the forts of Louisiana; but that warrior-statesman in the West, as his kindred spirit, Dupleix, in the East, had fallen on the evil days of Louis XV., when valour and merit in the French colonies were sacrificed to the pleasures and parasites of Versailles. The natural result followed. Louisiana was yielded up to Spain in 1763, in order to reconcile the Court of Madrid to cessions required by that same Peace of Paris. Twenty years later Spain recovered from England the provinces of eastern and western Florida; and thus, at the dawn of the nineteenth century, the red and yellow flag waved over all the lands between California, New Orleans, and the southern tip of Florida.[1]

[1] For these and the following negotiations see Lucien Bonaparte's "Mémoires," vol. ii., and Garden's "Traités de Paix," vol. iii., ch.

Many efforts were made by France to regain her old Mississippi province; and in 1795, at the break up of the First Coalition, the victorious Republic pressed Spain to yield up this territory, where the settlers were still French at heart. Doubtless the weak King of Spain would have yielded; but his chief Minister, Godoy, clung tenaciously to Louisiana, and consented to cede only the Spanish part of St. Domingo—a diplomatic success which helped to earn him the title of the Prince of the Peace. So matters remained until Talleyrand, as Foreign Minister, sought to gain Louisiana from Spain before it slipped into the horny fists of the Anglo-Saxons.

That there was every prospect of this last event was the conviction not only of the politicians at Washington, but also of every iron-worker on the Ohio and of every planter on the Tennessee. Those young but growing settlements chafed against the restraints imposed by Spain on the river trade of the lower Mississippi—the sole means available for their exports in times when the Alleghanies were crossed by only two tracks worthy the name of roads. In 1795 they gained free egress to the Gulf of Mexico and the right of bonding their merchandise in a special warehouse at New Orleans. Thereafter the United States calmly awaited the time when racial vigour and the exigencies of commerce should yield to them the possession of the western prairies and the little townships of Arkansas and New Orleans. They reckoned without taking count of the eager longing of the French for their former colony and the determination of Napoleon to give effect to this honourable sentiment.

In July, 1800, when his negotiations with the United

xxxiv. The Hon. H. Taylor, in "The North American Review" of November, 1898, has computed that the New World was thus divided in 1801:

Spain	7,028,000	square miles.
Great Britain	3,719,000	„ „
Portugal	3,209,000	„ „
United States	827,000	„ „
Russia	577,000	„ „
France	29,000	„ „

States were in good train, the First Consul sent to Madrid instructions empowering the French Minister there to arrange a treaty whereby France should receive Louisiana in return for the cession of Tuscany to the heir of the Duke of Parma. This young man had married the daughter of Charles IV. of Spain ; and, for the aggrandizement of his son-in-law, that *roi fainéant*, was ready, nay eager, to bargain away a quarter of a continent ; and he did so by a secret convention signed at St. Ildefonso on October 7th, 1800.

But though Charles rejoiced over this exchange, Godoy, who was gifted with some insight into the future, was determined to frustrate it. Various events occurred which enabled this wily Minister, first to delay, and then almost to prevent, the odious surrender. Chief among these was the certainty that the transfer from weak hands to strong hands would be passionately resented by the United States ; and until peace with England was fully assured, and the power of Toussaint broken, it would be folly for the First Consul to risk a conflict with the United States. That they would fight rather than see the western prairies pass into the First Consul's hands was abundantly manifest. It is proved by many patriotic pamphlets. The most important of these—"An Address to the Government of the United States on the Cession of Louisiana to the French," published at Philadelphia in 1802—quoted largely from a French *brochure* by a French Councillor of State. The French writer had stated that along the Mississippi his countrymen would find boundless fertile prairies, and as for the opposition of the United States—"a nation of pedlars and shopkeepers"—that could be crushed by a French alliance with the Indian tribes. The American writer thereupon passionately called on his fellow-citizens to prevent this transfer : "France is to be dreaded only, or chiefly, on the Mississippi. The Government must take Louisiana before it passes into her hands. The iron is now hot : command us to rise as one man and strike." These and other like protests at last stirred

the placid Government at Washington; and it bade the American Minister at Paris to make urgent remonstrances, the sole effect of which was to draw from Talleyrand the bland assurance that the transfer had not been seriously contemplated.[1]

By the month of June, 1802, all circumstances seemed to smile on Napoleon's enterprise: England had ratified the Peace of Amiens, Toussaint had delivered himself up to Leclerc: France had her troops strongly posted in Tuscany and Parma, and could, if necessary, forcibly end the remaining scruples felt at Madrid; while the United States, with a feeble army and a rotting navy, were controlled by the most peaceable and Franco-phil of their presidents, Thomas Jefferson. The First Consul accordingly ordered an expedition to be prepared, as if for the reinforcement of Leclerc in St. Domingo, though it was really destined for New Orleans; and he instructed Talleyrand to soothe or coerce the Court of Madrid into the final act of transfer. The offer was therefore made by the latter (June 19th) in the name of the First Consul that *in no case would Louisiana ever be alienated to a Third Power.* When further delays supervened, Bonaparte, true to his policy of continually raising his demands, required that Eastern and Western Florida should also be ceded to him by Spain, on condition that the young King of Etruria (for so Tuscany was now to be styled) should regain his father's duchy of Parma.[2]

A word of explanation must here find place as to this singular proposal. Parma had long been under French control; and, in March, 1801, by the secret Treaty of Madrid, the ruler of that duchy, whose death seemed imminent, was to resign his claims thereto, provided that his son should gain Etruria—as had been already provided for at St. Ildefonso and Lunéville. The duke was, however, allowed to keep his duchy until his death,

[1] "History of the United States, 1801-1813," by H. Adams, vol. i., p. 409.

[2] Napoleon's letter of November 2nd, 1802.

which occurred on October 9th, 1802; and it is stated by our envoy in Paris to have been hastened by news of that odious bargain.[1] His death now furnished Bonaparte with a good occasion for seeking to win an immense area in the New World at the expense of a small Italian duchy, which his troops could at any time easily overrun. This consideration seems to have occurred even to Charles IV.; he refused to barter the Floridas against Parma. The re-establishment of his son-in-law in his paternal domains was doubtless desirable, but not at the cost of so exacting a heriot as East and West Florida.

From out this maze of sordid intrigues two or three facts challenge our attention. Both Bonaparte and Charles IV. regarded the most fertile waste lands then calling for the plough as fairly exchanged against half a million of Tuscans; but the former feared the resentment of the United States, and sought to postpone a rupture until he could coerce them by overwhelming force. It is equally clear that, had he succeeded in this enterprise, France might have gained a great colonial empire in North America protected from St. Domingo as a naval and military base, while that island would have doubly prospered from the vast supplies poured down the Mississippi; but this success he would have bought at the expense of a *rapprochement* between the United States and their motherland, such as a bitter destiny was to postpone to the end of the century.

The prospect of an Anglo-American alliance might well give pause even to Napoleon. Nevertheless, he resolved to complete this vast enterprise, which, if successful, would have profoundly affected the New World and the relative importance of the French and English peoples. The Spanish officials at New Orleans, in pursuance of orders from Madrid, now closed the lower Mississippi to vessels of the United States (October, 1802). At once a furious outcry arose in the States against an act which not only violated their treaty rights, but fore-

[1] Merry's despatch of October 21st, 1802.

shadowed the coming grip of the First Consul. For this outburst he was prepared: General Victor was at Dunkirk, with five battalions and sixteen field-pieces, ready to cross the Atlantic, ostensibly for the relief of Leclerc, but really in order to take possession of New Orleans.[1] But his plan was foiled by the sure instincts of the American people, by the disasters of the St. Domingo expedition, and by the restlessness of England under his various provocations. Jefferson, despite his predilections for France, was compelled to forbid the occupation of Louisiana: he accordingly sent Monroe to Paris with instructions to effect a compromise, or even to buy outright the French claims on that land. Various circumstances favoured this mission. In the first week of the year 1803 Napoleon received the news of Leclerc's death and the miserable state of the French in St. Domingo; and as the tidings that he now received from Egypt, Syria, Corfu, and the East generally, were of the most alluring kind, he tacitly abandoned his Mississippi enterprise in favour of the oriental schemes which were closer to his heart. In that month of January he seems to have turned his gaze from the western hemisphere towards Turkey, Egypt, and India. True, he still seemed to be doing his utmost for the occupation of Louisiana, but only as a device for sustaining the selling price of the western prairies.

When the news of this change of policy reached the ears of Joseph and Lucien Bonaparte, it aroused their bitterest opposition. Lucien plumed himself on having struck the bargain with Spain which had secured that vast province at the expense of an Austrian archduke's

[1] The instructions which he sent to Victor supply an interesting commentary on French colonial policy: "The system of this, as of all our other colonies, should be to concentrate its commerce in the national commerce: it should especially aim at establishing its relations with our Antilles, so as to take the place in those colonies of the American commerce. . . . The captain-general should abstain from every innovation favourable to strangers, who should be restricted to such communications as are absolutely indispensable to the prosperity of Louisiana."

crown ; and Joseph knew only too well that Napoleon was freeing himself in the West in order to be free to strike hard in Europe and the East. The imminent rupture of the Peace of Amiens touched him keenly : for that peace was his proudest achievement. If colonial adventures must be sought, let them be sought in the New World, where Spain and the United States could offer only a feeble resistance, rather than in Europe and Asia, where unending war must be the result of an aggressive policy.

At once the brothers sought an interview with Napoleon. He chanced to be in his bath, a warm bath perfumed with scents, where he believed that tired nature most readily found recovery. He ordered them to be admitted, and an interesting family discussion was the result. On his mentioning the proposed sale, Lucien at once retorted that the Legislature would never consent to this sacrifice. He there touched the wrong chord in Napoleon's nature : had he appealed to the memories of *le grand monarque* and of Montcalm, possibly he might have bent that iron will ; but the mention of the consent of the French deputies roused the spleen of the autocrat, who, from amidst the scented water, mockingly bade his brother go into mourning for the affair, which he, and he alone, intended to carry out. This gibe led Joseph to threaten that he would mount the tribune in the Chambers and head the opposition to this unpatriotic surrender. Defiance flashed forth once more from the bath ; and the First Consul finally ended their bitter retorts by spasmodically rising as suddenly falling backwards, and drenching Joseph to the skin. His peals of scornful laughter, and the swooning of the valet, who was not yet fully inured to these family scenes, interrupted the argument of the piece ; but, when resumed a little later, *à sec*, Lucien wound up by declaring that, if he were not his brother, he would be his enemy. "My enemy! That is rather strong," exclaimed Napoleon. "You my enemy! I would break you, see, like this box"—and he dashed his snuff-box on the carpet. It did

not break: but the portrait of Josephine was detached and broken. Whereupon Lucien picked up the pieces and handed them to his brother, remarking: "It is a pity: meanwhile, until you can break me, it is your wife's portrait that you have broken."[1]

To Talleyrand, Napoleon was equally unbending: summoning him on April 11th, he said:

"Irresolution and deliberation are no longer in season. I renounce Louisiana. It is not only New Orleans that I cede: it is the whole colony, without reserve; I know the price of what I abandon. I have proved the importance I attach to this province, since my first diplomatic act with Spain had the object of recovering it. I renounce it with the greatest regret: to attempt obstinately to retain it would be folly. I direct you to negotiate the affair."[2]

After some haggling with Monroe, the price agreed on for this territory was 60,000,000 francs, the United States also covenanting to satisfy the claims which many of their citizens had on the French treasury. For this paltry sum the United States gained a peaceful title to the debatable lands west of Lake Erie and to the vast tracts west of the Mississippi. The First Consul carried out his threat of denying to the deputies of France any voice in this barter. The war with England sufficed to distract their attention; and France turned sadly away from the western prairies, which her hardy sons had first opened up, to fix her gaze, first on the Orient, and thereafter on European conquests. No more was heard of Louisiana, and few references were permitted to the disasters in St. Domingo; for Napoleon abhorred any mention of a *coup manqué*, and strove to banish from the imagination of France those dreams of a trans-Atlantic Empire which had drawn him, as they were destined sixty years later to draw his nephew, to the verge of war with

[1] Lucien Bonaparte, "Mémoires," vol. ii., ch. ix. He describes Josephine's alarm at this ill omen at a time when rumours of a divorce were rife.

[2] Barbé-Marbois, "Hist. de Louisiana," quoted by H. Adams, *op. cit.*, vol. ii., p. 27; Roloff, "Napoleon's Colonial Politik."

the rising republic of the New World. In one respect, the uncle was more fortunate than the nephew. In signing the treaty with the United States, the First Consul could represent his conduct, not as a dexterous retreat from an impossible situation, but as an act of grace to the Americans and a blow to England. "This accession of territory," he said, "strengthens for ever the power of the United States, and I have just given to England a maritime rival that sooner or later will humble her pride." [1]

In the East there seemed to be scarcely the same field for expansion as in the western hemisphere. Yet, as the Orient had ever fired the imagination of Napoleon, he was eager to expand the possessions of France in the Indian Ocean. In October, 1801, these amounted to the Isle of Bourbon and the Isle of France; for the former French possessions in India, namely, Pondicherry, Mahé, Karikal, Chandernagore, along with their factories at Yanaon, Surat, and two smaller places, had been seized by the British, and were not to be given back to France until six months after the definitive treaty of peace was signed. From these scanty relics it seemed impossible to rear a stable fabric: yet the First Consul grappled with the task. After the cessation of hostilities, he ordered Admiral Gantheaume with four ships of war to show the French flag in those seas, and to be ready in due course to take over the French settlements in India. Meanwhile he used his utmost endeavours in the negotiations at Amiens to gain an accession of land for Pondicherry, such as would make it a possible base for military enterprise. Even before those negotiations began he expressed to Lord Cornwallis his desire for such an extension; and when the British plenipotentiary urged the cession of Tobago to Great Britain, he offered to exchange it for an

[1] Garden, "Traités," vol. viii., ch. xxxiv. See too Roederer, "Œuvres," vol. iii., p. 461, for Napoleon's expressions after dinner on January 11th, 1803: "Maudit sucre, maudit café, maudites colonies."

establishment or territory in India.[1] Herein the First Consul committed a serious tactical blunder; for his insistence on this topic and his avowed desire to negotiate direct with the Nabob undoubtedly aroused the suspicions of our Government.

Still greater must have been their concern when they learnt that General Decaen was commissioned to receive back the French possessions in India; for that general in 1800 had expressed to Bonaparte his hatred of the English, and had begged, even if he had to wait ten years, that he might be sent where he could fight them, especially in India. As was his wont, Bonaparte said little at the time; but after testing Decaen's military capacity, he called him to his side at midsummer, 1802, and suddenly asked him if he still thought about India. On receiving an eager affirmative, he said, "Well, you will go." "In what capacity?" "As captain-general: go to the Minister of Marine and of the Colonies and ask him to communicate to you the documents relating to this expedition." By such means did Bonaparte secure devoted servants. It is scarcely needful to add that the choice of such a man only three months after the signature of the Treaty of Amiens proves that the First Consul only intended to keep that peace as long as his forward colonial policy rendered it desirable.[2]

Meanwhile our Governor-General, Marquis Wellesley, was displaying an activity which might seem to be dictated by knowledge of Bonaparte's designs. There was, indeed, every need of vigour. Nowhere had French and British interests been so constantly in collision as in India. In 1798 France had intrigued with Tippoo Sahib at Seringapatam, and arranged a treaty for the purpose of expelling the British nation from India. When in 1799 French hopes were dashed by Arthur Wellesley's capture of that city and the death of Tippoo, there still remained

[1] Cornwallis, "Correspondence," vol. iii., despatch of December 3rd, 1801.

[2] See the valuable articles on General Decaen's papers in the "Revue historique" of 1879 and of 1881.

some prospect of overthrowing British supremacy by uniting the restless Mahratta rulers of the north and centre, especially Scindiah and Holkar, in a powerful confederacy. For some years their armies, numbering some 60,000 men, had been drilled and equipped by French adventurers, the ablest and most powerful of whom was M. Perron. Doubtless it was with the hope of gaining their support that the Czar Paul and Bonaparte had in 1800 formed the project of invading India by way of Persia. And after the dissipation of that dream, there still remained the chance of strengthening the Mahratta princes so as to contest British claims with every hope of success. Forewarned by the home Government of Bonaparte's eastern designs, our able and ambitious Governor-General now prepared to isolate the Mahratta chieftains, to cut them off from all contact with France, and, if necessary, to shatter Scindiah's army, the only formidable native force drilled by European methods.

Such was the position of affairs when General Decaen undertook the enterprise of revivifying French influences in India.

The secret instructions which he received from the First Consul, dated January 15th, 1803, were the following:

"To communicate with the peoples or princes who are most impatient under the yoke of the English Company. . . . To send home a report six months after his arrival in India, concerning all information that he shall have collected, on the strength, the position, and the feeling of the different peoples of India, as well as on the strength and position of the different English establishments; . . . his views, and hopes that he might have of finding support, in case of war, so as to be able to maintain himself in the Peninsula. . . . Finally, as one must reason on the hypothesis that we should not be masters of the sea and could hope for slight succour,"

Decaen is to seek among the French possessions or elsewhere a place serving as a *point d'appui*, where in the last resort he could capitulate and thus gain the means

of being transported to France with arms and baggage. Of this *point d'appui* he will

"strive to take possession after the first months . . . whatever be the nation to which it belongs, Portuguese, Dutch, or English. . . . If war should break out between England and France before the 1st of Vendémiaire, Year XIII. (September 22nd, 1804), and the captain-general is warned of it before receiving the orders of the Government, he has *carte blanche* to fall back on the Ile de France and the Cape, or to remain in India. . . . It is now considered impossible that we should have war with England without dragging in Holland. One of the first cares of the captain-general will be to gain control over the Dutch, Portuguese, and Spanish establishments, and of their resources. The captain-general's mission is at first one of observation, on political and military topics, with the small forces that he takes out, and an occupation of *comptoirs* for our commerce: but the First Consul, if well informed by him, will perhaps be able some day to put him in a position to acquire that great glory which hands down the memory of men beyond the lapse of centuries."[1]

Had these instructions been known to English statesmen, they would certainly have ended the peace which was being thus perfidiously used by the First Consul for the destruction of our Indian Empire. But though their suspicions were aroused by the departure of Decaen's expedition and by the activity of French agents in India, yet the truth remained half hidden, until, at a later date, the publication of General Decaen's papers shed a flood of light on Napoleon's policy.

Owing to various causes, the expedition did not set sail from Brest until the beginning of March, 1803. The date should be noticed. It proves that at this time Napoleon judged that a rupture of peace was not imminent; and when he saw his miscalculation, he sought to delay the war with England as long as possible in order to allow time for Decaen's force at least to reach the Cape, then

[1] Dumas' "Précis des Événements Militaires," vol. xi., p. 189. The version of these instructions presented by Thiers, book xvi., is utterly misleading.

in the hands of the Dutch. The French squadron was too weak to risk a fight with an English fleet; it comprised only four ships of war, two transports, and a few smaller vessels, carrying about 1,800 troops.[1] The ships were under the command of Admiral Linois, who was destined to be the terror of our merchantmen in eastern seas. Decaen's first halt was at the Cape, which had been given back by us to the Dutch East India Company on February 21st, 1803. The French general found the Dutch officials in their usual state of lethargy: the fortifications had not been repaired, and many of the inhabitants, and even of the officials themselves, says Decaen, were devoted to the English. After surveying the place, doubtless with a view to its occupation as the *point d'appui* hinted at in his instructions, he set sail on the 27th of May, and arrived before Pondicherry on the 11th of July.[2]

In the meantime important events had transpired which served to wreck not only Decaen's enterprise, but the French influence in India. In Europe the flames of war had burst forth, a fact of which both Decaen and the British officials were ignorant; but the Governor of Fort St. George (Madras), having, before the 15th of June, "received intelligence which appeared to indicate the certainty of an early renewal of hostilities between His Majesty and France," announced that he must postpone the restitution of Pondicherry to the French, until he should have the authority of the Governor-General for such action.[3]

[1] Lord Whitworth, our ambassador in Paris, stated (despatch of March 24th, 1803) that Decaen was to be quietly reinforced by troops in French pay sent out by every French, Spanish, or Dutch ship going to India, so as to avoid attracting notice. ("England and Napoleon," edited by Oscar Browning, p. 137.)

[2] See my article, "The French East India Expedition at the Cape," and unpublished documents in the "Eng. Hist. Rev." of January, 1900. French designs on the Cape strengthened our resolve to acquire it, as we prepared to do in the summer of 1805.

[3] Wellesley, "Despatches," vol. iii., Appendix, despatch of August 1st, 1803. See too Castlereagh's "Letters and Despatches," Second

The Marquis Wellesley was still less disposed to any such restitution. French intervention in the affairs of Switzerland, which will be described later on, had so embittered Anglo-French relations that on October the 17th, 1802, Lord Hobart, our Minister of War and for the Colonies, despatched a "most secret" despatch, stating that recent events rendered it necessary to postpone this retrocession. At a later period Wellesley received contrary orders, instructing him to restore French and Dutch territories; but he judged that step to be inopportune considering the gravity of events in the north of India. So active was the French propaganda at the Mahratta Courts, and so threatening were their armed preparations, that he redoubled his efforts for the consolidation of British supremacy. He resolved to strike at Scindiah, unless he withdrew his southern army into his own territories; and, on receiving an evasive answer from that prince, who hoped by temporizing to gain armed succours from France, he launched the British forces against him. Now was the opportunity for Arthur Wellesley to display his prowess against the finest forces of the East; and brilliantly did the young warrior display it. The victories of Assaye in September, and of Argaum in November, scattered the southern Mahratta force, but only after desperate conflicts that suggested how easily a couple of Decaen's battalions might have turned the scales of war.

Meanwhile, in the north, General Lake stormed Aligarh, and drove Scindiah's troops back to Delhi. Disgusted at the incapacity and perfidy that surrounded him, Perron threw up his command; and another conflict near Delhi yielded that ancient seat of Empire to our trading Company. In three months the results of the toil of Scindiah, the restless ambition of Holkar,

Series, vol. i., pp. 166-176, for Lord Elgin's papers and others, all of 1802, describing the utter weakness of Turkey, the probability of Egypt falling to any invader, of Caucasia and Persia being menaced by Russia, and the need of occupying Aden as a check to any French designs on India from Suez.

the training of European officers, and the secret intrigues of Napoleon, were all swept to the winds. Wellesley now annexed the land around Delhi and Agra, besides certain coast districts which cut off the Mahrattas from the sea, also stipulating for the complete exclusion of French agents from their States. Perron was allowed to return to France; and the brusque reception accorded him from Bonaparte may serve to measure the height of the First Consul's hopes, the depth of his disappointment, and his resentment against a man who was daunted by a single disaster.[1]

Meanwhile it was the lot of Decaen to witness, in inglorious inactivity, the overthrow of all his hopes. Indeed, he barely escaped the capture which Wellesley designed for his whole force, as soon as he should hear of the outbreak of war in Europe; but by secret and skilful measures all the French ships, except one transport, escaped to their appointed rendezvous, the Ile de France. Enraged by these events, Decaen and Linois determined to inflict every possible injury on their foes. The latter soon swept from the eastern seas British merchantmen valued at a million sterling, while the general ceased not to send emissaries into India to encourage the millions of natives to shake off the yoke of "a few thousand English."

These officers effected little, and some of them were handed over to the English authorities by the now obsequious potentates. Decaen also endeavoured to carry out the First Consul's design of occupying strategic points in the Indian Ocean. In the autumn of 1803 he sent a fine cruiser to the Imaum of Muscat, to induce him to cede a station for commercial purposes at that port. But Wellesley, forewarned by our agent at

[1] Wellesley's despatch of July 13th, 1804: with it he inclosed an intercepted despatch, dated Pondicherry, August 6th, 1803, a "Mémoire sur l'Importance actuelle de l'Inde et les moyens les plus efficaces d'y rétablir la Nation Française dans son ancienne splendeur." The writer, Lieutenant Lefebvre, set forth the unpopularity of the British in India and the immense wealth which France could gain from its conquest.

ELLE HOLLANDE, 1807.

Bagdad, had made a firm alliance with the Imaum, who accordingly refused the request of the French captain. The incident, however, supplies another link in the chain of evidence as to the completeness of Napoleon's oriental policy, and yields another proof of the vigour of our great proconsul at Calcutta, by whose foresight our Indian Empire was preserved and strengthened.[1]

Bonaparte's enterprises were by no means limited to well-known lands. The unknown continent of the Southern Seas appealed to his imagination, which pictured its solitudes transformed by French energy into a second fatherland. Australia, or New Holland, as it was then called, had long attracted the notice of French explorers, but the English penal settlements at and near Sydney formed the only European establishment on the great southern island at the dawn of the nineteenth century.

Bonaparte early turned his eyes towards that land. On his voyage to Egypt he took with him the volumes in which Captain Cook described his famous discoveries; and no sooner was he firmly installed as First Consul than he planned with the Institute of France a great French expedition to New Holland. The full text of the plan has never been published: probably it was suppressed or destroyed; and the sole public record relating to it is contained in the official account of the expedition published at the French Imperial Press in 1807.[2] According to this description, the aim was solely geographical and scientific. The First Consul and the Institute of France desired that the ships should proceed to Van Diemen's Land, explore its rivers, and then complete the survey of the south coast of the continent, so as to

[1] The report of the Imaum is given in Castlereagh's "Letters," Second Series, vol. i., p. 203.

[2] "Voyage de Découverte aux Terres Australes sur les Corvettes, le Géographe et le Naturaliste," rédigé par M. F. Péron (Paris, 1807-15). From the Atlas the accompanying map has been copied.

see whether behind the islands of the Nuyts Archipelago there might be a channel connecting with the Gulf of Carpentaria, and so cutting New Holland in half. They were then to sail west to "Terre Leeuwin," ascend the Swan River, complete the exploration of Shark's Bay and the north-western coasts, and winter in Timor or Amboyne. Finally, they were to coast along New Guinea and the Gulf of Carpentaria, and return to France in 1803.

In September, 1800, the ships, having on board twenty-three scientific men, set sail from Havre under the command of Commodore Baudin. They received no molestation from English cruisers, it being a rule of honour to give Admiralty permits to all members of genuinely scientific and geographical parties. Nevertheless, even on its scientific side, this splendidly-equipped expedition produced no results comparable with those achieved by Lieutenant Bass or by Captain Flinders. The French ships touched at the Ile de France, and sailed thence for Van Diemen's Land. After spending a long time in the exploration of its coasts and in collecting scientific information, they made for Sydney in order to repair their ships and gain relief for their many invalids. Thence, after incidents which will be noticed presently, they set sail in November, 1802, for Bass Strait and the coast beyond. They seem to have overlooked the entrance to Port Phillip—a discovery effected by Murray in 1801, but not made public till three years later—and failed to notice the outlet of the chief Australian river, which is obscured by a shallow lake.

There they were met by Captain Flinders, who, on H.M.S. "Investigator," had been exploring the coast between Cape Leeuwin and the great gulfs which he named after Lords St. Vincent and Spencer. Flinders was returning towards Sydney, when, in the long desolate curve of the bay which he named from the incident Encounter Bay, he saw the French ships. After brief and guarded intercourse the explorers separated, the French proceeding to survey the gulfs whence the "Investigator" had just sailed; while Flinders, after a

short stay at Sydney and the exploration of the northern coast and Torres Strait, set out for Europe.[1]

Apart from the compilation of the most accurate map of Australia which had then appeared, and the naming of several features on its coasts—*e.g.*, Capes Berrouilli and Gantheaume, the Bays of Rivoli and of Lacépède, and the Freycinet Peninsula, which are still retained—the French expedition achieved no geographical results of the first importance.

Its political aims now claim attention. A glance at the accompanying map will show that, under the guise of being an emissary of civilization, Commodore Baudin was prepared to claim half the continent for France. Indeed, his final inquiry at Sydney about the extent of the British claims on the Pacific coast was so significant as to elicit from Governor King the reply that the whole of Van Diemen's Land and of the coast from Cape Howe on the south of the mainland to Cape York on the north was British territory. King also notified the suspicious action of the French Commander to the Home Govern-

[1] His later mishaps may here be briefly recounted. Being compelled to touch at the Ile de France for repairs to his ship, he was there seized and detained as a spy by General Decaen, until the chivalrous intercession of the French explorer, Bougainville, finally availed to procure his release in the year 1810. The conduct of Decaen was the more odious, as the French crews during their stay at Sydney in the autumn of 1802, when the news of the Peace of Amiens was as yet unknown, had received not only much help in the repair of their ships, but most generous personal attentions, officials and private persons at Sydney agreeing to put themselves on short rations in that season of dearth in order that the explorers might have food. Though this fact was brought to Decaen's knowledge by the brother of Commodore Baudin, he none the less refused to acknowledge the validity of the passport which Flinders, as a geographical explorer, had received from the French authorities, but detained him in captivity for seven years. For the details see "A Voyage of Discovery to the Australian Isles," by Captain Flinders (London, 1814), vol. ii., chs. vii.-ix. The names given by Flinders on the coasts of Western and South Australia have been retained owing to the priority of his investigation: but the French names have been kept on the coast between the mouth of the Murray and Bass Strait for the same reason.

ment; and when the French sailed away to explore the coast of southern and central Australia he sent a ship to watch their proceedings. When, therefore, Commodore Baudin effected a landing on King Island, the Union Jack was speedily hoisted and saluted by the blue-jackets of the British vessel; for it was rumoured that French officers had said that King Island would afford a good station for the command of Bass Strait and the seizure of British ships. This was probably mere gossip. Baudin in his interviews with Governor King at Sydney disclaimed any intention of seizing Van Diemen's Land; but he afterwards stated that *he did not know what were the plans of the French Government with regard to that island.*[1]

Long before this dark saying could be known at Westminster, the suspicions of our Government had been aroused; and, on February 13th, 1803, Lord Hobart penned a despatch to Governor King bidding him to take every precaution against French annexations, and to form settlements in Van Diemen's Land and at Port Phillip. The station of Risden was accordingly planted on the estuary of the Derwent, a little above the present town of Hobart; while on the shores of Port Phillip another expedition sent out from the mother country sought, but for the present in vain, to find a suitable site. The French cruise therefore exerted on the fortunes of the English and French peoples an influence such as has frequently accrued from their colonial rivalry: it spurred on the island Power to more vigorous efforts than she would otherwise have put forth, and led to the discomfiture of her continental rival. The plans of Napoleon for the acquisition of Van Diemen's Land and the middle of Australia had an effect like that which the ambition of Montcalm, Dupleix, Lally, and Perron has exerted on the ultimate destiny of many a vast and fertile territory.

[1] See Baudin's letter to King of December 23rd, 1803, in vol. v. (Appendix) of "Historical Records of New South Wales," and the other important letters and despatches contained there, as also *ibid.*, pp. 133 and 376.

Still, in spite of the destruction of his fleet at Trafalgar, Napoleon held to his Australian plans. No fact, perhaps, is more suggestive of the dogged tenacity of his will than his order to Péron and Freycinet to publish through the Imperial Press at Paris an exhaustive account of their Australian voyage, accompanied by maps which claimed half of that continent for the tricolour flag. It appeared in 1807, the year of Tilsit and of the plans for the partition of Portugal and her colonies between France and Spain. The hour seemed at last to have struck for the assertion of French supremacy in other continents, now that the Franco-Russian alliance had durably consolidated it in Europe. And who shall say that, but for the Spanish Rising and the genius of Wellington, a vast colonial empire might not have been won for France, had Napoleon been free to divert his energies away from this "old Europe" of which he professed to be utterly weary?

His whole attitude towards European and colonial politics revealed a statesmanlike appreciation of the forces that were to mould the fortunes of nations in the nineteenth century. He saw that no rearrangement of the European peoples could be permanent. They were too stubborn, too solidly nationalized, to bear the yoke of the new Charlemagne. "I am come too late," he once exclaimed to Marmont; "men are too enlightened, there is nothing great left to be done." These words reveal his sense of the artificiality of his European conquests. His imperial instincts could find complete satisfaction only among the docile fate-ridden peoples of Asia, where he might unite the functions of an Alexander and a Mahomet: or, failing that, he would carve out an empire from the vast southern lands, organizing them by his unresting powers and ruling them as œkist and as despot. This task would possess a permanence such as man's conquests over Nature may always enjoy, and his triumphs over his fellows seldom or never. The political reconstruction of Europe was at best one of an infinite number of such changes, always progressing and

never completed; while the peopling of new lands and the founding of States belonged to that highest plane of political achievement wherein schemes of social beneficence and the dictates of a boundless ambition could maintain an eager and unending rivalry. While a strictly European policy could effect little more than a raking over of long-cultivated parterres, the foundation of a new colonial empire would be the turning up of the virgin soil of the limitless prairie.

If we inquire by the light of history why these grand designs failed, the answer must be that they were too vast fitly to consort with an ambitious European policy. His ablest adviser noted this fundamental defect as rapidly developing after the Peace of Amiens, when "he began to sow the seeds of new wars which, after overwhelming Europe and France, were to lead him to his ruin." This criticism of Talleyrand on a man far greater than himself, but who lacked that saving grace of moderation in which the diplomatist excelled, is consonant with all the teachings of history. The fortunes of the colonial empires of Athens and Carthage in the ancient world, of the Italian maritime republics, of Portugal and Spain, and, above all, the failure of the projects of Louis XIV. and Louis XV. serve to prove that only as the motherland enjoys a sufficiency of peace at home and on her borders can she send forth in ceaseless flow those supplies of men and treasure which are the very life-blood of a new organism. That beneficent stream might have poured into Napoleon's Colonial Empire, had not other claims diverted it into the barren channels of European warfare. The same result followed as at the time of the Seven Years' War, when the double effort to wage great campaigns in Germany and across the oceans sapped the strength of France, and the additions won by Dupleix and Montcalm fell away from her flaccid frame.

Did Napoleon foresee a similar result? His conduct in regard to Louisiana and in reference to Decaen's expedition proves that he did, but only when it was too late. As soon as he saw that his policy was about to provoke

another war with Britain long before he was ready for it, he decided to forego his oceanic schemes and to concentrate his forces on his European frontiers. The decision was dictated by a true sense of imperial strategy. But what shall we say of his sense of imperial diplomacy? The foregoing narrative and the events to be described in the next chapters prove that his mistake lay in that overweening belief in his own powers and in the pliability of his enemies which was the cause of his grandest triumphs and of his unexampled overthrow.

CHAPTER XVI

NAPOLEON'S INTERVENTIONS

WAR, said St. Augustine, is but the transition from a lower to a higher state of peace. The saying is certainly true for those wars that are waged in defence of some great principle or righteous cause. It may perhaps be applied with justice to the early struggles of the French revolutionists to secure their democratic Government against the threatened intervention of monarchical States. But the danger of vindicating the cause of freedom by armed force has never been more glaringly shown than in the struggles of that volcanic age. When democracy had gained a sure foothold in the European system, the war was still pushed on by the triumphant republicans at the expense of neighbouring States, so that, even before the advent of Bonaparte, their polity was being strangely warped by the influence of military methods of rule. The brilliance of the triumphs won by that young warrior speedily became the greatest danger of republican France; and as the extraordinary energy developed in her people by recent events cast her feeble neighbours to the ground, Europe cowered away before the ever-increasing bulk of France. In their struggles after democracy the French finally reverted to the military type of Government, which accords with many of the cherished instincts of their race: and the military-democratic compromise embodied in Napoleon endowed that people with the twofold force of national pride and of conscious strength springing from their new institutions.

With this was mingled contempt for neighbouring

peoples who either could not or would not gain a similar independence and prestige. Everything helped to feed this self-confidence and contempt for others. The venerable fabric of the Holy Roman Empire was rocking to and fro amidst the spoliations of its ecclesiastical lands by lay princes, in which its former champions, the Houses of Hapsburg and Hohenzollern, were the most exacting of the claimants. The Czar, in October, 1801, had come to a profitable understanding with France concerning these "secularizations." A little later France and Russia began to draw together on the Eastern Question in a way threatening to Turkey and to British influence in the Levant.[1] In fact, French diplomacy used the partition of the German ecclesiastical lands and the threatened collapse of the Ottoman power as a potent means of busying the Continental States and leaving Great Britain isolated. Moreover, the great island State was passing through ministerial and financial difficulties which robbed her of all the fruits of her naval triumphs and made her diplomacy at Amiens the laughing-stock of the world. When monarchical ideas were thus discredited, it was idle to expect peace. The struggling upwards towards a higher plane had indeed begun; democracy had effected a lodgment in Western Europe; but the old order in its bewildered gropings after some sure basis had not yet touched bottom on that rock of nationality which was to yield a new foundation for monarchy amidst the strifes of the nineteenth century. Only when the monarchs received the support of their French-hating subjects could an equilibrium of force and of enthusiasms yield the long-sought opportunity for a durable peace.[2]

[1] Mr. Merry's ciphered despatch from Paris, May 7th, 1802.

[2] It is impossible to enter into the complicated question of the reconstruction of Germany effected in 1802-3. A general agreement had been made at Rastadt that, as an indemnity for the losses of German States in the conquest of the Rhineland by France, they should receive the ecclesiastical lands of the old Empire. The Imperial Diet appointed a delegation to consider the whole question; but before this body assembled (on August 24th, 1802), a number of treaties had been secretly made at Paris, with the

The negotiations at Amiens had amply shown the great difficulty of the readjustment of European affairs. If our Ministers had manifested their real feelings about Napoleon's presidency of the Italian Republic, war would certainly have broken forth. But, as has been seen, they preferred to assume the attitude of the ostrich, the worst possible device both for the welfare of Europe and the interests of Great Britain; for it convinced Napoleon that he could safely venture on other interventions; and this he proceeded to do in the affairs of Italy, Holland, and Switzerland.

On September 21st, 1802, appeared a *senatus consultum* ordering the incorporation of Piedmont in France. This important territory, lessened by the annexation of its eastern parts to the Italian Republic, had for five months been provisionally administered by a French general as a military district of France. Its definite incorporation in the great Republic now put an end to all hopes of restoration of the House of Savoy. For the King of Sardinia, now an exile in his island, the British Ministry had made some efforts at Amiens; but, as it knew that the Czar and the First Consul had agreed on offering him some suitable indemnity, the hope was cherished that the new sovereign, Victor Emmanuel I., would be restored to his mainland possessions. That hope was now at an end. In vain did Lord Whitworth, our ambassador at Paris, seek to help the Russian envoy to gain a fit indemnity. Sienna and its lands were named, as if in derision; and though George III. and the Czar ceased not to press the claims of the House of Savoy, yet no more tempting offer came from Paris,

approval of Russia, which favoured Prussia and depressed Austria. Austria received the archbishoprics of Trent and Brixen: while her Archdukes (formerly of Tuscany and Modena) were installed in Salzburg and Breisgau. Prussia, as the *protégé* of France, gained Hildesheim, Paderborn, Erfurt, the city of Münster, etc. Bavaria received Würzburg, Bamberg, Augsburg, Passau, etc. See Garden, "Traités," vol. vii., ch. xxxii.; "Annual Register" of 1802, pp. 648-665; Oncken, "Consulat und Kaiserthum," vol. ii.; and Beer's "Zehn Jahre Oesterreichischer Politik."

except a hint that some part of European Turkey might be found for him; and the young ruler nobly refused to barter for the petty Siennese, or for some Turkish pachalic, his birthright to the lands which, under a happier Victor Emmanuel, were to form the nucleus of a United Italy.[1] A month after the absorption of Piedmont came the annexation of Parma. The heir to that duchy, who was son-in-law to the King of Spain, had been raised to the dignity of King of Etruria; and in return for this aggrandizement in Europe, Charles IV. bartered away to France the whole of Louisiana. Nevertheless, the First Consul kept his troops in Parma, and on the death of the old duke in October, 1802, Parma and its dependencies were incorporated in the French Republic.

The naval supremacy of France in the Mediterranean was also secured by the annexation of the Isle of Elba with its excellent harbour of Porto Ferrajo. Three deputies from Elba came to Paris to pay their respects to their new ruler. The Minister of War was thereupon charged to treat them with every courtesy, to entertain them at dinner, to give them 3,000 francs apiece, and to hint that on their presentation to Bonaparte they might make a short speech expressing the pleasure of their people at being united with France. By such deft rehearsals did this master in the art of scenic displays weld Elba on to France and France to himself.

Even more important was Bonaparte's intervention in Switzerland. The condition of that land calls for some explanation. For wellnigh three centuries the Switzers had been grouped in thirteen cantons, which differed widely in character and constitution. The Central or Forest Cantons still retained the old Teutonic custom of regulating their affairs in their several folk-moots, at which every householder appeared fully armed. Elsewhere the confederation had developed less admirable customs, and the richer lowlands especially were under the hereditary control of rich burgher families. There

[1] The British notes of April 28th and May 8th, 1803, again demanded a suitable indemnity for the King of Sardinia.

was no constitution binding these States in any effective union. Each of the cantons claimed a governmental sovereignty that was scarcely impaired by the deliberations of the Federal Diet. Besides these sovereign States were others that held an ill-defined position as allies; among these were Geneva, Basel, Bienne, Saint Gall, the old imperial city of Mühlhausen in Alsace, the three Grisons, the principality of Neufchâtel, and Valais on the Upper Rhone. Last came the subject-lands, Aargau, Thurgau, Ticino, Vaud, and others, which were governed in various degrees of strictness by their cantonal overlords. Such was the old Swiss Confederacy: it somewhat resembled that chaotic Macedonian league of mountain clans, plain-dwellers, and cities, which was so profoundly influenced by the infiltration of Greek ideas and by the masterful genius of Philip. Switzerland was likewise to be shaken by a new political influence, and thereafter to be controlled by the greatest statesman of the age.

On this motley group of cantons and districts the French Revolution exerted a powerful influence; and when, in 1798, the people of Vaud strove to throw off the yoke of Berne, French troops, on the invitation of the insurgents, invaded Switzerland, quelled the brave resistance of the central cantons, and ransacked the chief of the Swiss treasuries. After the plunderers came the constitution-mongers, who forthwith forced on Switzerland democracy of the most French and geometrical type: all differences between the sovereign cantons, allies, and subject-lands were swept away, and Helvetia was constituted as an indivisible republic—except Valais, which was to be independent, and Geneva and Mühlhausen, which were absorbed by France. The subject districts and non-privileged classes benefited considerably by the social reforms introduced under French influence; but a constitution recklessly transferred from Paris to Berne could only provoke loathing among a people that never before had submitted to foreign dictation. Moreover, the new order of things violated the most elementary

needs of the Swiss, whose racial and religious instincts claimed freedom of action for each district or canton.

Of these deep-seated feelings the oligarchs of the plains, no less than the democrats of the Forest Cantons, were now the champions; while the partisans of the new-fangled democracy were held up to scorn as the supporters of a cast-iron centralization. It soon became clear that the constitution of 1798 could be perpetuated only by the support of the French troops quartered on that unhappy land; for throughout the years 1800 and 1801 the political see-saw tilted every few months, first in favour of the oligarchic or federal party, then again towards their unionist opponents. After the Peace of Lunéville, which recognized the right of the Swiss to adopt what form of government they thought fit, some of their deputies travelled to Paris with the draft of a constitution lately drawn up by the Chamber at Berne, in the hope of gaining the assent of the First Consul to its provisions and the withdrawal of French troops. They had every reason for hope: the party then in power at Berne was that which favoured a centralized democracy, and their plenipotentiary in Paris, a thorough republican named Stapfer, had been led to hope that Switzerland would now be allowed to carve out its own destiny. What, then, was his surprise to find the First Consul increasingly enamoured of federalism. The letters written by Stapfer to the Swiss Government at this time are highly instructive.[1]

On March 10th, 1801, he wrote:

"What torments us most is the cruel uncertainty as to the real aims of the French Government. Does it want to federalize us in order to weaken us and to rule more surely by our divisions: or does it really desire our independence and welfare, and is its delay only the result of its doubts as to the true wishes of the Helvetic nation?"

Stapfer soon found that the real cause of delay was the

[1] See his letters of January 28th, 1801, February 27th, March 10th, March 25th, April 10th, and May 16th, published in a work, "Bonaparte, Talleyrand et Stapfer" (Zürich, 1869).

non-completion of the cession of Valais, which Bonaparte urgently desired for the construction of a military road across the Simplon Pass ; and as the Swiss refused this demand, matters remained at a standstill. "The whole of Europe would not make him give up a favourite scheme," wrote Stapfer on April 10th ; "the possession of Valais is one of the matters closest to his heart."

The protracted pressure of a French army of occupation on that already impoverished land proved irresistible ; and some important modifications of the Swiss project of a constitution, on which the First Consul insisted, were inserted in the new federal compact of May, 1801. Switzerland was now divided into seventeen cantons ; and despite the wish of the official Swiss envoys for a strongly centralized government, Bonaparte gave large powers to the cantonal authorities. His motives in this course of action have been variously judged. In giving greater freedom of movement to the several cantons, he certainly adopted the only statesmanlike course : but his conduct during the negotiation, his retention of Valais, and the continued occupation of Switzerland by his troops, albeit in reduced numbers, caused many doubts as to the sincerity of his desire for a final settlement.

The unionist majority at Berne soon proceeded to modify his proposals, which they condemned as full of defects and contradictions ; while the federals strove to keep matters as they were. In the month of October their efforts succeeded, thanks to the support of the French ambassador and soldiery ; they dissolved the Assembly, annulled its recent amendments ; and their influence procured for Reding, the head of the oligarchic party, the office of Landamman, or supreme magistrate. So reactionary, however, were their proceedings, that the First Consul recalled the French general as a sign of his displeasure at his help recently offered to the federals. Their triumph was brief : while their chiefs were away at Easter, 1802, the democratic unionists effected another *coup d'état*—it was the fourth—and promulgated one more constitution. This change seems also to have

been brought about with the connivance of the French authorities:[1] their refusal to listen to Stapfer's claims for a definite settlement, as well as their persistent hints that the Swiss could not by themselves arrange their own affairs, argued a desire to continue the epoch of quarterly *coups d'état.*

The victory of the so-called democrats at Berne now brought the whole matter to the touch. They appealed to the people in the first Swiss *plébiscite*, the precursor of the famous *referendum.* It could now be decided without the interference of French troops; for the First Consul had privately declared to the new Landamman, Dolder, that he left it to his Government to decide whether the foreign soldiery should remain as a support or should evacuate Switzerland.[2] After many searchings of heart, the new authorities decided to try their fortunes alone—a response which must have been expected at Paris, where Stapfer had for months been urging the removal of the French forces. For the first time since the year 1798 Switzerland was therefore free to declare her will. The result of the *plébiscite* was decisive enough, 72,453 votes being cast in favour of the latest constitution, and 92,423 against it. Nothing daunted by this rebuff, and, adopting a device which the First Consul had invented for the benefit of Dutch liberty, the Bernese leaders declared that the 167,172 adult voters who had

[1] Daendliker, "Geschichte der Schweiz," vol. iii., p. 418; Muralt's "Reinhard," p. 55; and Stapfer's letter of April 28th: "Malgré cette apparente neutralité que le gouvernement français déclare vouloir observer pour le moment, différentes circonstances me persuadent qu'il a vu avec plaisir passer la direction des affaires des mains de la majorité du Sénat [helvétique] dans celles de la minorité du Petit Conseil."

[2] Garden, "Traités," vol. viii., p. 10. Mr. Merry, our *chargé d'affaires* at Paris, reported July 21st: "M. Stapfer makes a boast of having obtained the First Consul's consent to withdraw the French troops entirely from Switzerland. I learn from some well-disposed Swiss who are here that such a consent has been given; but they consider it only as a measure calculated to increase the disturbances in their country and to furnish a pretext for the French to enter it again."

not voted at all must reckon as approving the new order of things. The flimsiness of this pretext was soon disclosed. The Swiss had had enough of electioneering tricks, hole-and-corner revolutions, and paper compacts. They rushed to arms; and if ever Carlyle's appeal away from ballot-boxes and parliamentary tongue-fencers to the primæval *mights of man* can be justified, it was in the sharp and decisive conflicts of the early autumn of 1802 in Switzerland. The troops of the central authorities, marching forth from Berne to quell the rising ferment, sustained a repulse at the foot of Mont Pilatus, as also before the walls of Zürich; and, the revolt of the federals ever gathering force, the Helvetic authorities were driven from Berne to Lausanne. There they were planning flight across the Lake of Geneva to Savoy, when, on October 15th, the arrival of Napoleon's aide-de-camp, General Rapp, with an imperious proclamation dismayed the federals and promised to the discomfited unionists the mediation of the First Consul for which they had humbly pleaded.[1]

Napoleon had apparently viewed the late proceedings in Switzerland with mingled feelings of irritation and amused contempt. "Well, there you are once more in a Revolution" was his hasty comment to Stapfer at a diplomatic reception shortly after Easter; "try and get tired of all that." It is difficult, however, to believe that so keen-sighted a statesman could look forward to anything but commotions for a land that was being saddled with an impracticable constitution, and whence the controlling French forces were withdrawn at that very crisis. He was certainly prepared for the events of September: many times he had quizzingly asked Stapfer how the constitution was faring, and he must have received with quiet amusement the solemn reply that there could be no doubt as to its brilliant success. When the truth flashed

[1] Reding, in a pamphlet published shortly after this time, gave full particulars of his interviews with Bonaparte at Paris, and stated that he had fully approved of his (Reding's) federal plans. Neither Bonaparte nor Talleyrand ever denied this.

on Stapfer he was dumbfoundered, especially as Talleyrand at first mockingly repulsed any suggestion of the need of French mediation, and went on to assure him that his master had neither counselled nor approved the last constitution, the unfitness of which was now shown by the widespread insurrection. Two days later, however, Napoleon altered his tone and directed Talleyrand vigorously to protest against the acts and proclamations of the victorious federals as "the most violent outrage to French honour." On the last day of September he issued a proclamation to the Swiss declaring that he now revoked his decision not to mingle in Swiss politics, and ordered the federal authorities and troops to disperse, and the cantons to send deputies to Paris for the regulation of their affairs under his mediation. Meanwhile he bade the Swiss live once more in hope: their land was on the brink of a precipice, but it would soon be saved! Rapp carried analogous orders to Lausanne and Berne, while Ney marched in with a large force of French troops that had been assembled near the Swiss frontiers.

So glaring a violation of Swiss independence and of the guaranteeing Treaty of Lunéville aroused indignation throughout Europe. But Austria was too alarmed at Prussian aggrandizement in Germany to offer any protest; and, indeed, procured some trifling gains by giving France a free hand in Switzerland.[1] The Court of Berlin, then content to play the jackal to the French lion, revealed to the First Consul the appeals for help privately made to Prussia by the Swiss federals:[2] the Czar, influenced doubtless by his compact with France concerning German affairs, and by the advice of his former tutor, the Swiss Laharpe, offered no encouragement; and it was left to Great Britain to make the sole effort then attempted for the cause of Swiss independence. For some time past the cantons had made appeals to

[1] See "Paget Papers," vol. ii., despatches of October 29th, 1802, and January 28th, 1803.

[2] Napoleon avowed this in his speech to the Swiss deputies at St. Cloud, December 12th, 1802.

the British Government, which now, in response, sent an English agent, Moore, to confer with their chiefs, and to advance money and promise active support if he judged that a successful resistance could be attempted.[1] The British Ministry undoubtedly prepared for an open rupture with France on this question. Orders were immediately sent from London that no more French or Dutch colonies were to be handed back; and, as we have seen, the Cape of Good Hope and the French settlements in India were refused to the Dutch and French officers who claimed their surrender.

Hostilities, however, were for the present avoided. In face of the overwhelming force which Ney had close at hand, the chiefs of the central cantons shrank from any active opposition; and Moore, finding on his arrival at Constance that they had decided to submit, speedily returned to England. Ministers beheld with anger and dismay the perpetuation of French supremacy in that land; but they lacked the courage openly to oppose the First Consul's action, and gave orders that the stipulated cessions of French and Dutch colonies should take effect.

The submission of the Swiss and the weakness of all the Powers encouraged the First Consul to impose his will on the deputies from the cantons, who assembled at Paris at the close of the year 1802. He first caused their aims and the capacity of their leaders to be sounded in a Franco-Swiss Commission, and thereafter assembled them at St. Cloud on Sunday, December 12th. He

[1] Lord Hawkesbury's note of October 10th, 1802, the appeal of the Swiss, and the reply of Mr. Moore from Constance, are printed in full in the papers presented to Parliament, May 18th, 1803.

The Duke of Orleans wrote from Twickenham a remarkable letter to Pitt, dated October 18th, 1802, offering to go as leader to the Swiss in the cause of Swiss and of European independence: "I am a natural enemy to Bonaparte and to all similar Governments. . . . England and Austria can find in me all the advantages of my being a French prince. Dispose of me, Sir, and show me the way. I will follow it." See Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. iii., ch. xxxiii.

harangued them at great length, hinting very clearly that the Swiss must now take a far lower place in the scale of peoples than in the days when France was divided into sixty fiefs, and that union with her could alone enable them to play a great part in the world's affairs: nevertheless, as they clung to independence he would undertake in his quality of mediator to end their troubles, and yet leave them free. That they could attain unity was a mere dream of their metaphysicians: they must rely on the cantonal organization, always provided that the French and Italian districts of Vaud and the upper Ticino were not subject to the central or German cantons: to prevent such a dishonour he would shed the blood of 50,000 Frenchmen: Berne must also open its golden book of the privileged families to include four times their number. For the rest, the Continental Powers could not help them, and England had "no right to meddle in Swiss affairs." The same menace was repeated in more strident tones on January 29th:

"I tell you that I would sacrifice 100,000 men rather than allow England to meddle in your affairs: if the Cabinet of St. James uttered a single word for you, it would be all up with you, I would unite you to France: if that Court made the least insinuation of its fears that I would be your Landamman, I would make myself your Landamman."

There spake forth the inner mind of the man who, whether as child, youth, lieutenant, general, Consul, or Emperor, loved to bear down opposition.[1]

In those days of superhuman activity, when he was carving out one colonial Empire in the New World and preparing to found another in India, when he was outwitting the Cardinals, rearranging the map of Germany,

[1] See Roederer, "Œuvres," vol. iii., p. 454, for the curious changes which Napoleon prescribed in the published reports of these speeches; also Stapfer's despatch of February 3rd, 1803, which is more trustworthy than the official version in Napoleon's "Correspondance." This, however, contains the menacing sentence: "It is recognized by Europe that Italy and Holland, as well as Switzerland, are at the disposition of France."

breathing new life into French commerce and striving to shackle that of Britain, he yet found time to utter some of the sagest maxims as to the widely different needs of the Swiss cantons. He assured the deputies that he spoke as a Corsican and a mountaineer, who knew and loved the clan system. His words proved it. With sure touch he sketched the characteristics of the French and Swiss people. Switzerland needed the local freedom imparted by her cantons: while France required unity, Switzerland needed federalism: the French rejected this last as damaging their power and glory; but the Swiss did not ask for glory; they needed "political tranquillity and obscurity": moreover, a simple pastoral people must have extensive local rights, which formed their chief distraction from the monotony of life: democracy was a necessity for the forest cantons; but let not the aristocrats of the towns fear that a wider franchise would end their influence, for a people dependent on pastoral pursuits would always cling to great families rather than to electoral assemblies: let these be elected on a fairly wide basis. Then again, what ready wit flashed forth in his retort to a deputy who objected to the Bernese Oberland forming part of the Canton of Berne: "Where do you take your cattle and your cheese?"—"To Berne."—"Whence do you get your grain, cloth, and iron?"—"From Berne."—"Very well: 'To Berne, from Berne'—you consequently belong to Berne." The reply is a good instance of that canny materialism which he so victoriously opposed to feudal chaos and monarchical ineptitude.

Indeed, in matters great as well as small his genius pierced to the heart of a problem: he saw that the democratic unionists had failed from the rigidity of their centralization, while the federals had given offence by insufficiently recognizing the new passion for social equality.[1] He now prepared to federalize Switzerland

[1] It is only fair to say that they had recognized their mistake and had recently promised equality of rights to the formerly subject districts and to all classes. See Muralt's "Reinhard," p. 113.

on a moderately democratic basis; for a policy of balance, he himself being at the middle of the see-saw, was obviously required by good sense as well as by self-interest. Witness his words to Roederer on this subject:

"While satisfying the generality, I cause the patricians to tremble. In giving to these last the appearance of power, I oblige them to take refuge at my side in order to find protection. I let the people threaten the aristocrats, so that these may have need of me. I will give them places and distinctions, but they will hold them from me. This system of mine has succeeded in France. See the clergy. Every day they will become, in spite of themselves, more devoted to my government than they had foreseen."

How simple and yet how subtle is this statecraft; simplicity of aim, with subtlety in the choice of means: this is the secret of his success.

After much preliminary work done by French commissioners and the Swiss deputies in committee, the First Consul summed up the results of their labours in the Act of Mediation of February 19th, 1803, which constituted the Confederation in nineteen cantons, the formerly subject districts now attaining cantonal dignity and privileges. The forest cantons kept their ancient folk-moots, while the town cantons such as Berne, Zürich, and Basel were suffered to blend their old institutions with democratic customs, greatly to the chagrin of the unionists, at whose invitation Bonaparte had taken up the work of mediation.

The federal compact was also a compromise between the old and the new. The nineteen cantons were to enjoy sovereign powers under the shelter of the old federal pact. Bonaparte saw that the fussy imposition of French governmental forms in 1798 had wrought infinite harm, and he now granted to the federal authorities merely the powers necessary for self-defence: the federal forces were to consist of 15,200 men—a number less than that which by old treaty Switzerland had to furnish to France. The central power was vested in a

Landamman and other officers appointed yearly by one of the six chief cantons taken in rotation; and a Federal Diet, consisting of twenty-five deputies—one from each of the small cantons, and two from each of the six larger cantons—met to discuss matters of general import, but the balance of power rested with the cantons: further articles regulated the Helvetic debt and declared the independence of Switzerland—as if a land could be independent which furnished more troops to the foreigner than it was allowed to maintain for its own defence. Furthermore, the Act breathed not a word about religious liberty, freedom of the Press, or the right of petition: and, viewing it as a whole, the friends of freedom had cause to echo the complaint of Stapfer that "the First Consul's aim was to annul Switzerland politically, but to assure to the Swiss the greatest possible domestic happiness."

I have judged it advisable to give an account of Franco-Swiss relations on a scale proportionate to their interest and importance; they exhibit, not only the meanness and folly of the French Directory, but the genius of the great Corsican in skilfully blending the new and the old, and in his rejection of the fussy pedantry of French theorists and the worst prejudices of the Swiss oligarchs. Had not his sage designs been intertwined with subtle intrigues which assured his own unquestioned supremacy in that land, the Act of Mediation might be reckoned among the grandest and most beneficent achievements. As it is, it must be regarded as a masterpiece of able but selfish statecraft, which contrasts unfavourably with the disinterested arrangements sanctioned by the allies for Switzerland in 1815.

CHAPTER XVII

THE RENEWAL OF WAR

THE re-occupation of Switzerland by the French in October, 1802, was soon followed by other serious events, which convinced the British Ministry that war was hardly to be avoided. Indeed, before the treaty was ratified, ominous complaints had begun to pass between Paris and London.

Some of these were trivial, others were highly important. Among the latter was the question of commercial intercourse. The British Ministry had neglected to obtain any written assurance that trade relations should be resumed between the two countries; and the First Consul, either prompted by the protectionist theories of the Jacobins, or because he wished to exert pressure upon England in order to extort further concessions, determined to restrict trade with us to the smallest possible dimensions. This treatment of England was wholly exceptional, for in his treaties concluded with Russia, Portugal, and the Porte, Napoleon had procured the insertion of clauses which directly fostered French trade with those lands. Remonstrances soon came from the British Government that "strict prohibitions were being enforced to the admission of British commodities and manufactures into France, and very vigorous restrictions were imposed on British vessels entering French ports"; but, in spite of all representations, we had the mortification of seeing the hardware of Birmingham, and the ever-increasing stores of cotton and woollen goods, shut out from France and her subject-lands, as well as

from the French colonies which we had just handed back.

In this policy of commercial prohibition Napoleon was confirmed by our refusal to expel the Bourbon princes. He declined to accept our explanation that they were not officially recognized, and could not be expelled from England without a violation of the rights of hospitality; and he bitterly complained of the personal attacks made upon him in journals published in London by the French *émigrés*. Of these the most acrid, namely, those of Peltier's paper, "L'Ambigu," had already received the reprobation of the British Ministry; but, as had been previously explained at Amiens, the Addington Cabinet decided that it could not venture to curtail the liberty of the Press, least of all at the dictation of the very man who was answering the pop-guns of our unofficial journals by double-shotted retorts in the official "Moniteur." Of these last His Majesty did not deign to make any formal complaint; but he suggested that their insertion in the organ of the French Government should have prevented Napoleon from preferring the present protests.

This wordy war proceeded with unabated vigour on both sides of the Channel, the British journals complaining of the Napoleonic dictatorship in Continental affairs, while the "Moniteur" bristled with articles whose short, sharp sentences could come only from the First Consul. The official Press hitherto had been characterized by dull decorum, and great was the surprise of the older Courts when the French official journals compared the policy of the Court of St. James with the methods of the Barbary rovers and the designs of the Miltonic Satan.[1] Nevertheless, our Ministry prosecuted and convicted Peltier for libel, an act which, at the time, produced an excellent impression at Paris.[2]

[1] See, *inter alia*, the "Moniteur" of August 8th, October 9th, November 6th, 1802; of January 1st and 9th, February 19th, 1803.

[2] Lord Whitworth's despatches of February 28th and March 3rd, 1803, in Browning's "England and Napoleon."

But more serious matters were now at hand. Newspaper articles and commercial restrictions were not the cause of war, however much they irritated the two peoples.

The general position of Anglo-French affairs in the autumn of 1802 is well described in the official instructions given to Lord Whitworth when he was about to proceed as ambassador to Paris. For this difficult duty he had several good qualifications. During his embassy at St. Petersburg he had shown a combination of tact and firmness which imposed respect, and doubtless his composure under the violent outbreaks of the Czar Paul furnished a recommendation for the equally trying post at Paris, which he filled with a *sang froid* that has become historic. Possibly a more genial personality might have smoothed over some difficulties at the Tuileries: but the Addington Ministry, having tried geniality in the person of Cornwallis, naturally selected a man who was remarkable for his powers of quiet yet firm resistance.

His first instructions of September 10th, 1802, are such as might be drawn up between any two Powers entering on a long term of peace. But the series of untoward events noticed above overclouded the political horizon; and the change finds significant expression in the secret instructions of November 14th. He is now charged to state George III.'s determination "never to forego his right of interfering in the affairs of the Continent on any occasion in which the interests of his own dominions or those of Europe in general may appear to him to require it." A French despatch is then quoted, as admitting that, for every considerable gain of France on the Continent, Great Britain had some claim to compensation: and such a claim, it was hinted, might now be proffered after the annexation of Piedmont and Parma. Against the continued occupation of Holland by French troops and their invasion of Switzerland, Whitworth was to make moderate but firm remonstrances, but in such a way as not to commit us finally. He was to employ

an equal discretion with regard to Malta. As Russia and Prussia had as yet declined to guarantee the arrangements for that island's independence, it was evident that the British troops could not yet be withdrawn.

"His Majesty would certainly be justified in claiming the possession of Malta, as some counterpoise to the acquisitions of France, since the conclusion of the definitive treaty: but it is not necessary to decide now whether His Majesty will be disposed to avail himself of his pretensions in this respect."

Thus between September 10th and November 14th we passed from a distinctly pacific to a bellicose attitude, and all but formed the decision to demand Malta as a compensation for the recent aggrandizements of France. To have declared war at once on these grounds would certainly have been more dignified. But, as our Ministry had already given way on many topics, a sudden declaration of war on Swiss and Italian affairs would have stultified its complaisant conduct on weightier subjects. Moreover, the whole drift of eighteenth-century diplomacy, no less than Bonaparte's own admission, warranted the hope of securing Malta by way of "compensation." The adroit bargainer, who was putting up German Church lands for sale, who had gained Louisiana by the Parma-Tuscany exchange, and still professed to the Czar his good intentions as to an "indemnity" for the King of Sardinia, might well be expected to admit the principle of compensation in Anglo-French relations when these were being jeopardized by French aggrandizement; and, as will shortly appear, the First Consul, while professing to champion international law against perfidious Albion, privately admitted her right to compensation, and only demurred to its practical application when his oriental designs were thereby compromised.

Before Whitworth proceeded to Paris, sharp remonstrances had been exchanged between the French and British Governments. To our protests against Napoleon's interventions in neighbouring States, he retorted

by demanding "the whole Treaty of Amiens and nothing but that treaty." Whereupon Hawkesbury answered: "The state of the Continent at the period of the Treaty of Amiens, and nothing but that state." In reply Napoleon sent off a counterblast, alleging that French troops had evacuated Taranto, that Switzerland had requested his mediation, that German affairs possessed no novelty, and that England, having six months previously waived her interest in continental affairs, could not resume it at will. The retort, which has called forth the admiration of M. Thiers, is more specious than convincing. Hawkesbury's appeal was, not to the sword, but to law; not to French influence gained by military occupations that contravened the Treaty of Lunéville, but to international equity.

Certainly, the Addington Cabinet committed a grievous blunder in not inserting in the Treaty of Amiens a clause stipulating the independence of the Batavian and Helvetic Republics. Doubtless it relied on the Treaty of Lunéville, and on a Franco-Dutch convention of August, 1801, which specified that French troops were to remain in the Batavian Republic only up to the time of the general peace. But it is one thing to rely on international law, and quite another thing, in an age of violence and chicanery, to hazard the gravest material interests on its observance. Yet this was what the Addington Ministry had done: "His Majesty consented to make numerous and most important restitutions to the Batavian Government on the consideration of that Government being independent and not being subject to any foreign control."[1] Truly, the restoration of the Cape of Good Hope and of other colonies to the Dutch, solely in reliance on the observance of international law by Napoleon and Talleyrand, was, as the event proved, an act of singular credulity. But, looking at this matter fairly and squarely, it must be allowed that Napoleon's reply evaded the essence of the British complaint; it was merely an *argumentum ad hominem;* it convicted

[1] Secret instructions to Lord Whitworth, November 14th, 1802.

the Addington Cabinet of weakness and improvidence; but in equity it was null and void, and in practical politics it betokened war.

As Napoleon refused to withdraw his troops from Holland, and continued to dominate that unhappy realm, it was clear that the Cape of Good Hope would speedily be closed to our ships—a prospect which immensely enhanced the value of the overland route to India, and of those portals of the Orient, Malta and Egypt. To the Maltese Question we now turn, as also, later on, to the Eastern Question, with which it was then closely connected.

Many causes excited the uneasiness of the British Government about the fate of Malta. In spite of our effort not to wound the susceptibilities of the Czar, who was protector of the Order of St. John, that sensitive young ruler had taken umbrage at the article relating to that island. He now appeared merely as one of the six Powers guaranteeing its independence, not as the sole patron and guarantor, and he was piqued at his name appearing after that of the Emperor Francis![1] For the present arrangement the First Consul was chiefly to blame; but the Czar vented his displeasure on England. On April 28th, 1802, our envoy at Paris, Mr. Merry, reported as follows:

"Either the Russian Government itself, or Count Markoff alone personally, is so completely out of humour with us for not having acted in strict concert with them, or him, or in conformity to their ideas in negotiating the definitive treaty [of Amiens], that I find he takes pains to turn it into ridicule, and particularly to represent the arrangement we have made for Malta as impracticable and consequently as completely null."

The despatches of our ambassador at St. Petersburg, Lord St. Helens, and of his successor, Admiral Warren, are of the same tenor. They report the Czar's annoyance with England over the Maltese affair, and his refusal to listen even to the joint Anglo-French request,

[1] "Foreign Office Records," Russia, No. 50.

of November 18th, 1802, for his guarantee of the Amiens arrangements.[1] A week later Alexander announced that he would guarantee the independence of Malta, provided that the complete sovereignty of the Knights of St. John was recognized—that is, without any participation of the native Maltese in the affairs of that Order—and that the island should be garrisoned by Neapolitan troops, paid by France and England, until the Knights should be able to maintain their independence. This reopening of the question discussed, *ad nauseam*, at Amiens proved that the Maltese Question would long continue to perplex the world. The matter was still further complicated by the abolition of the Priories, Commanderies, and property of the Order of St. John by the French Government in the spring of 1802—an example which was imitated by the Court of Madrid in the following autumn; and as the property of the Knights in the French part of Italy had also lapsed, it was difficult to see how the scattered and impoverished Knights could form a stable government, especially if the native Maltese were not to be admitted to a share in public affairs. This action of France, Spain, and Russia fully warranted the British Government in not admitting into the fortress the 2,000 Neapolitan troops that arrived in the autumn of 1802. Our evacuation of Malta was conditioned by several stipulations, five of which had not been fulfilled.[2] But the difficulties arising out of the reconstruction of this moribund Order were as nothing when compared

[1] In his usually accurate "Manuel historique de Politique Etrangère" (vol. ii., p. 238), M. Bourgeois states that in May, 1802, Lord St. Helens succeeded in persuading the Czar *not* to give his guarantee to the clause respecting Malta. Every despatch that I have read runs exactly counter to this statement: the fact is that the Czar took umbrage at the treaty and refused to listen to our repeated requests for his guarantee. Thiers rightly states that the British Ministry pressed the Czar to give his guarantee, but that France long neglected to send her application. Why this neglect if she wished to settle matters?

[2] Castlereagh's "Letters and Despatches," Second Series, vol. i., pp. 56 and 69; Dumas' "Evénements," ix. 91.

with those resulting from the reopening of a far vaster and more complex question—the "eternal" Eastern Question.

Rarely has the mouldering away of the Turkish Empire gone on so rapidly as at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Corruption and favouritism paralyzed the Government at Constantinople; masterful pachas, aping the tactics of Ali Pacha, the virtual ruler of Albania, were beginning to carve out satrapies in Syria, Asia Minor, Wallachia, and even in Roumelia itself. Such was the state of Turkey when the Sultan and his advisers heard with deep concern, in October, 1801, that the only Power on whose friendship they could firmly rely was about to relinquish Malta. At once he sent an earnest appeal to George III. begging him not to evacuate the island. This despatch is not in the archives of our Foreign Office; but the letter written from Malta by Lord Elgin, our ambassador at Constantinople, on his return home, sufficiently shows that the Sultan was conscious of his own weakness and of the schemes of partition which were being concocted at Paris. Bonaparte had already begun to sound both Austria and Russia on this subject, deftly hinting that the Power which did not early join in the enterprise would come poorly off. For the present both the rulers rejected his overtures; but he ceased not to hope that the anarchy in Turkey, and the jealousy which partition schemes always arouse among neighbours, would draw first one and then the other into his enterprise.[1]

The young Czar's disposition was at that period restless and unstable, free from the passionate caprices of his ill-fated father, and attuned by the fond efforts of the Swiss democrat Laharpe, to the loftiest aspirations of the France of 1789. Yet the son of Paul I. could hardly free himself from the instincts of a line of conquering Czars; his frank blue eyes, his graceful yet commanding figure, his high broad forehead and close

[1] Mémoire of Francis II. to Cobenzl (March 31st, 1801), in Beer, "Die Orientalische Politik Oesterreichs," Appendix.

shut mouth gave promise of mental energy; and his splendid physique and love of martial display seemed to invite him to complete the campaigns of Catherine II. against the Turks, and to wash out in the waves of the Danube the remorse which he still felt at his unwitting complicity in a parricidal plot. Between his love of liberty and of foreign conquest he for the present wavered, with a strange constitutional indecision that marred a noble character and that yielded him a prey more than once to a masterful will or to seductive projects. He is the Janus of Russian history. On the one side he faces the enormous problems of social and political reform, and yet he steals many a longing glance towards the dome of St. Sofia. This instability in his nature has been thus pointedly criticised by his friend Prince Czartoryski:[1]

"Grand ideas of the general good, generous sentiments, and the desire to sacrifice to them a part of the imperial authority, had really occupied the Emperor's mind, but they were rather a young man's fancies than a grown man's decided will. The Emperor liked forms of liberty, as he liked the theatre: it gave him pleasure and flattered his vanity to see the appearances of free government in his Empire: but all he wanted in this respect was forms and appearances: he did not expect them to become realities. He would willingly have agreed that every man should be free, on the condition that he should voluntarily do only what the Emperor wished."

This later judgment of the well-known Polish nationalist is probably embittered by the disappointments which he experienced at the Czar's hands; but it expresses the feeling of most observers of Alexander's early career, and it corresponds with the conclusion arrived at by Napoleon's favourite aide-de-camp, Duroc, who went to congratulate the young Czar on his accession and to entice him into oriental schemes—that there was nothing to hope and nothing to fear from the Czar. The *mot* was deeply true.[2]

[1] "Memoirs," vol. i., ch. xiii.

[2] Ulmann's "Russisch-Preussische Politik, 1801-1806," pp. 10-12.

From these oriental schemes the young Czar was, for the time, drawn aside towards the nobler path of social reform. The saving influence on this occasion was exerted by his old tutor, Laharpe. The ex-Director of Switzerland readily persuaded the Czar that Russia sorely needed political and social reform. His influence was powerfully aided by a brilliant group of young men, the Vorontzoffs, the Strogonoffs, Novossiltzoff, and Czartoryski, whose admiration for western ideas and institutions, especially those of Britain, helped to impel Alexander on the path of progress. Thus, when Napoleon was plying the Czar with notes respecting Turkey, that young ruler was commencing to bestow system on his administration, privileges on the serfs, and the feeble beginnings of education on the people.

While immersed in these beneficent designs, Alexander heard with deep chagrin of the annexation of Piedmont and Parma, and that Napoleon refused to the King of Sardinia any larger territory than the Siennese. This breach of good faith cut the Czar to the quick. It was in vain that Napoleon now sought to lure him into Turkish adventures by representing that France should secure the Morea for herself, that other parts of European Turkey might be apportioned to Victor Emmanuel I. and the French Bourbons. This cold-blooded proposal, that ancient dynasties should be thrust from the homes of their birth into alien Greek or Moslem lands, wounded the Czar's monarchical sentiments. He would none of it; nor did he relish the prospect of seeing the French in the Morea, whence they could complete the disorder of Turkey and seize on Constantinople. He saw whither Napoleon was leading him. He drew back abruptly, and even notified to our ambassador, Admiral Warren, that *England had better keep Malta.*[1]

[1] Warren reported (December 10th, 1802) that Vorontzoff warned him to be very careful as to the giving up of Malta; and, on January 19th, Czartoryski told him that "the Emperor wished the English to keep Malta." Bonaparte had put in a claim for the Morea to indemnify the Bourbons and the House of Savoy. ("F. O.," Russia, No. 51.)

Alexander also, on January 19th, 1803 (O. S.), charged his ambassador at Paris to declare that the existing system of Europe must not be further disturbed, that each Government should strive for peace and the welfare of its own people; that the frequent references of Napoleon to the approaching dissolution of Turkey were ill-received at St. Petersburg, where they were considered the chief cause of England's anxiety and refusal to disarm. He also suggested that the First Consul by some public utterance should dispel the fears of England as to a partition of the Ottoman Empire, and thus assure the peace of the world.[1]

Before this excellent advice was received, Napoleon astonished the world by a daring stroke. On the 30th of January the "Moniteur" printed in full the bellicose report of Colonel Sebastiani on his mission to Algiers, Egypt, Syria, and the Ionian Isles. As that mission was afterwards to be passed off as merely of a commercial character, it will be well to quote typical passages from the secret instructions which the First Consul gave to his envoy on September 5th, 1802:

"He will proceed to Alexandria: he will take note of what is in the harbour, the ships, the forces which the British as well as the Turks have there, the state of the fortifications, the state of the towers, the account of all that has passed since our departure both at Alexandria and in the whole of Egypt: finally, the present state of the Egyptians. . . . He will proceed to St. Jean d'Acre, will recommend the convent of Nazareth to Djezzar: will inform him that the agent of the [French] Republic is to appear at Acre: will find out about the fortifications he has had made: will walk along them himself, if there be no danger."

Fortifications, troops, ships of war, the feelings of the natives, and the protection of the Christians—these subjects were to be Sebastiani's sole care. Commerce was not once named. The departure of this officer had already alarmed our Government. Mr. Merry, our *chargé*

[1] Browning's "England and Napoleon," pp. 88-91.

d'affaires in Paris, had warned it as to the real aims in view, in the following "secret" despatch:

"PARIS, *September 25th*, 1802.

". . . I have learnt from good authority that he [Sebastiani] was accompanied by a person of the name of Jaubert (who was General Bonaparte's interpreter and confidential agent with the natives during the time he commanded in Egypt), who has carried with him regular powers and instructions, prepared by M. Talleyrand, to treat with Ibrahim-Bey for the purpose of creating a fresh and successful revolt in Egypt against the power of the Porte, and of placing that country again under the direct or indirect dependence of France, to which end he has been authorized to offer assistance from hence in men and money. The person who has confided to me this information understands that the mission to Ibrahim-Bey is confided solely to M. Jaubert, and that his being sent with Colonel Sebastiani has been in order to conceal the real object of it, and to afford him a safe conveyance to Egypt, as well as for the purpose of assisting the Colonel in his transactions with the Regencies of Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli."[1]

Merry's information was correct: it tallied with the secret instructions given by Napoleon to Sebastiani: and our Government, thus forewarned, at once adopted a stiffer tone on all Mediterranean and oriental questions. Sebastiani was very coldly received by our officer commanding in Egypt, General Stuart, who informed him that no orders had as yet come from London for our evacuation of that land. Proceeding to Cairo, the commercial emissary proposed to mediate between the Turkish Pacha and the rebellious Mamelukes, an offer which was firmly declined.[2] In vain did Sebastiani bluster and cajole by turns. The Pacha refused to allow him to go on to Assouan, the headquarters of the insurgent Bey, and the discomfited envoy made his way

[1] "F. O.," France, No. 72.

[2] We were undertaking that mediation. Lord Elgin's despatch from Constantinople, January 15th, 1803, states that he had induced the Porte to allow the Mamelukes to hold the province of Assouan. (Turkey, No. 38.)

back to the coast and took ship for Acre. Thence he set sail for Corfu, where he assured the people of Napoleon's wish that there should be an end to their civil discords. Returning to Genoa, and posting with all speed to Paris, he arrived there on January 25th, 1803. Five days later that gay capital was startled by the report of his mission, which was printed in full in the "Moniteur." It described the wretched state of the Turks in Egypt—the Pacha of Cairo practically powerless, and on bad terms with General Stuart, the fortifications everywhere in a ruinous state, the 4,430 British troops cantoned in and near Alexandria the Turkish forces beneath contempt. "Six thousand French would at present be enough to conquer Egypt." And as to the Ionian islands, "I do not stray from the truth in assuring you that these islands will declare themselves French as soon as an opportunity shall offer itself." [1]

Such were the chief items of this report. Various motives have been assigned for its publication. Some writers have seen in it a crushing retort to English newspaper articles. Others there are, as M. Thiers, who waver between the opinion that the publication of this report was either a "sudden unfortunate incident," or a protest against the "latitude" which England allowed herself in the execution of the Treaty of Amiens.

[1] Papers presented to Parliament on May 18th, 1803. I pass over the insults to General Stuart, as Sebastiani on February 2nd recanted to Lord Whitworth everything he had said, or had been made to say, on that topic, and mentioned Stuart "in terms of great esteem." According to Méneval ("Mems.," vol i., ch. iii.), Jaubert, who had been with Sebastiani, saw a proof of the report, as printed for the "Moniteur," and advised the omission of the most irritating passages; but Maret dared not take the responsibility for making such omissions. Lucien Bonaparte ("Mems.," vol. ii., ch. ix.) has another version—less credible, I think—that Napoleon himself dictated the final draft of the report to Sebastiani; and when the latter showed some hesitation, the First Consul muttered, as the most irritating passages were read out: "Parbleu, nous verrons si ceci—si cela—ne décidera pas John Bull à guerroyer." Joseph was much distressed about it, and exclaimed: "Ah, mon pauvre traité d'Amiens! Il ne tient plus qu'à un fil."

A consideration of the actual state of affairs at the end of January, 1803, will perhaps guide us to an explanation which is more consonant with the grandeur of Napoleon's designs. At that time he was all-powerful in the Old World. As First Consul for Life he was master of forty millions of men: he was President of the Italian Republic: to the Switzers, as to the Dutch, his word was law. Against the infractions of the Treaty of Lunéville, Austria dared make no protest. The Czar was occupied with domestic affairs, and his rebuff to Napoleon's oriental schemes had not yet reached Paris. As for the British Ministry, it was trembling from the attacks of the Grenvilles and Windhams on the one side, and from the equally vigorous onslaughts of Fox, who, when the Government proposed an addition to the armed forces, brought forward the stale platitude that a large standing army "was a dangerous instrument of influence in the hands of the Crown." When England's greatest orator thus impaired the unity of national feeling, and her only statesman, Pitt, remained in studied seclusion, the First Consul might well feel assured of the impotence of the Island Power, and view the bickering of her politicians with the same quiet contempt that Philip felt for the Athens of Demosthenes.

But while his prospects in Europe and the East were roseate, the western horizon bulked threateningly with clouds. The news of the disasters in St. Domingo reached Paris in the first week of the year 1803, and shortly afterwards came tidings of the ferment in the United States and the determination of their people to resist the acquisition of Louisiana by France. If he persevered with this last scheme, he would provoke war with that republic and drive it into the arms of England. From that blunder his statecraft instinctively saved him, and he determined to sell Louisiana to the United States.

So unheroic a retreat from the prairies of the New World must be covered by a demonstration towards the banks of the Nile and of the Indus. It was ever his plan to cover retreat in one direction by brilliant diversions in

another: only so could he enthrall the imagination of France, and keep his hold on her restless capital. And the publication of Sebastiani's report, with its glowing description of the fondness cherished for France alike by Moslems, Syrian Christians, and the Greeks of Corfu; its declamation against the perfidy of General Stuart; and its incitation to the conquest of the Levant, furnished him with the motive power for effecting a telling transformation scene and banishing all thoughts of losses in the West.[1]

The official publication of this report created a sensation even in France, and was not the *bagatelle* which M. Thiers has endeavoured to represent it.[2] But far greater was the astonishment at Downing Street, not at the facts disclosed by the report—for Merry's note had prepared our Ministers for them—but rather at the official avowal of hostile designs. At once our Government warned Whitworth that he must insist on our retaining Malta. He was also to protest against the publication of such a document, and to declare that George III. could not "enter into any further discussion relative to Malta until he received a satisfactory explanation." Far from offering it, Napoleon at once complained of our non-evacuation of Alexandria and Malta.

"Instead of that garrison [of Alexandria] being a means of protecting Egypt, it was only furnishing him with a pretence

[1] So Adams's "Hist. of the U.S.," vol. ii., pp. 12-21.

[2] Miot de Melito, "Mems.," vol. i., ch. xv., quotes the words of Joseph Bonaparte to him: "Let him [Napoleon] once more drench Europe with blood in a war that he could have avoided, and which, but for the outrageous mission on which he sent his Sebastiani, would never have occurred."

Talleyrand laboured hard to persuade Lord Whitworth that Sebastiani's mission was "solely commercial": Napoleon, in his long conversation with our ambassador, "did not affect to attribute it to commercial motives only," but represented it as necessitated by our infraction of the Treaty of Amiens. This excuse is as insincere as the former. The instructions to Sebastiani were drawn up on September 5th, 1802, when the British Ministry was about to fulfil the terms of the treaty relative to Malta and was vainly pressing Russia and Prussia for the guarantee of its independence

for invading it. This he should not do, whatever might be his desire to have it as a colony, because he did not think it worth the risk of a war, in which he might perhaps be considered the aggressor, and by which he should lose more than he could gain, since sooner or later Egypt would belong to France, either by the falling to pieces of the Turkish Empire, or by some arrangement with the Porte. . . . Finally," he asked, "why should not the mistress of the seas and the mistress of the land come to an arrangement and govern the world?"

A subtler diplomatist than Whitworth would probably have taken the hint for a Franco-British partition of the world: but the Englishman, unable at that moment to utter a word amidst the torrent of argument and invective, used the first opportunity merely to assure Napoleon of the alarm caused in England by Sebastiani's utterance concerning Egypt. This touched the First Consul at the wrong point, and he insisted that on the evacuation of Malta the question of peace or war must depend. In vain did the English ambassador refer to the extension of French power on the Continent. Napoleon cut him short: "I suppose you mean Piedmont and Switzerland: ce sont des——: vous n'avez pas le droit d'en parler à cette heure." Seeing that he was losing his temper, Lord Whitworth then diverted the conversation.[1]

This long tirade shows clearly what were the aims of the First Consul. He desired peace until his eastern plans were fully matured. And what ruler would not desire to maintain a peace so fruitful in conquests—that perpetuated French influence in Italy, Switzerland, and Holland, that enabled France to prepare for the dissolution of the Turkish Empire and to intrigue with the Mahrattas? Those were the conditions on which England could enjoy peace: she must recognize the arbitrament of France in the affairs of all neighbouring States, she must make no claim for compensation in the Mediterranean, and she must endure to be officially informed

[1] Despatch of February 21st.

that she alone could not maintain a struggle against France.[1]

But George III. was not minded to sink to the level of a Charles II. Whatever were the failings of our "farmer king," he was keenly alive to national honour and interests. These had been deeply wounded, even in the United Kingdom itself. Napoleon had been active in sending "commercial commissioners" into our land. Many of them were proved to be soldiers: and the secret instructions sent by Talleyrand to one of them at Dublin, which chanced to fall into the hands of our Government, showed that they were charged to make plans of the harbours, and of the soundings and moorings.[2]

Then again, the French were almost certainly helping Irish conspirators. One of these, Emmett, already suspected of complicity in the Despard conspiracy which aimed at the King's life, had, after its failure, sought shelter in France. At the close of 1802 he returned to his native land and began to store arms in a house near Rathfarnham. It is doubtful whether the authorities were aware of his plans, or, as is more probable, let the plot come to a head. The outbreak did not take place till the following July (after the renewal of war), when Emmett and some of his accomplices, along with Russell, who stirred up sedition in Ulster, paid for their folly with their lives. They disavowed any connection with France, but they must have based their hope of success on a promised French invasion of our coasts.[3]

The dealings of the French commercial commissioners and the beginnings of the Emmett plot increased the tension caused by Napoleon's masterful foreign policy; and the result was seen in the King's message to Par-

[1] "View of the State of the Republic," read to the Corps Législatif on February 21st, 1803.

[2] Papers presented to Parliament May 18th, 1803. See too Pitt's speech, May 23rd, 1803.

[3] See Russell's proclamation of July 22nd to the men of Antrim that "he doubted not but the French were then fighting in Scotland." ("Ann. Reg.," 1803, p. 246.) This document is ignored by Plowden ("Hist. of Ireland, 1801-1810").

liament on March 8th, 1803. In view of the military preparations and of the wanton defiance of the First Consul's recent message to the Corps Législatif, Ministers asked for the embodiment of the militia and the addition of 10,000 seamen to the navy. After Napoleon's declaration to our ambassador that France was bringing her forces on active service up to 480,000 men, the above-named increase of the British forces might well seem a reasonable measure of defence. Yet it so aroused the spleen of the First Consul that, at a public reception of ambassadors on March 13th, he thus accosted Lord Whitworth:

"'So you are determined to go to war.' 'No, First Consul,' I replied, 'we are too sensible of the advantage of peace.' 'Why, then, these armaments? Against whom these measures of precaution? I have not a single ship of the line in the French ports, but if you wish to arm I will arm also: if you wish to fight, I will fight also. You may perhaps kill France, but will never intimidate her.' 'We wish,' said I, 'neither the one nor the other. We wish to live on good terms with her.' 'You must respect treaties then,' replied he; 'woe to those who do not respect treaties. They shall answer for it to all Europe.' He was too agitated to make it advisable to prolong the conversation: I therefore made no answer, and he retired to his apartment, repeating the last phrase."[1]

This curious scene shows Napoleon in one of his weaker petulant moods: it left on the embarrassed spectators no impression of outraged dignity, but rather of the over-weening self-assertion of an autocrat who could push on hostile preparations, and yet flout the ambassador of the Power that took reasonable precautions in return. The slight offered to our ambassador, though hotly resented in Britain, had no direct effect on the negotiations, as the First Consul soon took the opportunity of tacitly apologizing for the occurrence; but indirectly the matter was infinitely important. By that utterance he nailed his colours to the mast with respect

[1] Despatch of March 14th, 1803. Compare it with the very mild version in Napoleon's "Corresp.," No. 6636.

to the British evacuation of Malta. With his keen insight into the French nature, he knew that "honour" was its mainspring, and that his political fortunes rested on the satisfaction of that instinct. He could not now draw back without affronting the prestige of France and undermining his own position. In vain did our Government remind him of his admission that "His Majesty should keep a compensation out of his conquests for the important acquisitions of territory made by France upon the Continent."[1] That promise, although official, was secret. Its violation would, at the worst, only offend the officials of Whitehall. Whereas, if he now acceded to their demand that Malta should be the compensation, he at once committed that worst of all crimes in a French statesman, of rendering himself ludicrous. In this respect, then, the scene of March 13th at the Tuileries was indirectly the cause of the bloodiest war that has desolated Europe.

Napoleon now regarded the outbreak of hostilities as probable, if not certain. Facts are often more eloquent than diplomatic assurances, and such facts are not wanting. On March 6th Decaen's expedition had set sail from Brest for the East Indies with no anticipation of immediate war. On March 16th a fast brig was sent after him with orders that he should return with all speed from Pondicherry to the Mauritius. Napoleon's correspondence also shows that, as early as March 11th, that is, after hearing of George III.'s message to Parliament, he expected the outbreak of hostilities: on that day he ordered the formation of flotillas at Dunkirk and Cherbourg, and sent urgent messages to the sovereigns of Russia, Prussia, and Spain, inveighing against England's perfidy. The envoy despatched to St. Petersburg was specially charged to talk to the Czar on philosophic questions, and to urge him to free the seas from England's tyranny.

Much as Addington and his colleagues loved peace, they were now convinced that it was more hazardous than open war. Malta was the only effectual bar to a

[1] Lord Hawkesbury to General Andreossy, March 10th.

French seizure of Egypt or an invasion of Turkey from the side of Corfu. With Turkey partitioned and Egypt in French hands, there would be no security against Napoleon's designs on India. The British forces evacuated the Cape of Good Hope on February 21st, 1803; they set sail from Alexandria on the 17th of the following month. By the former act we yielded up to France the sea route to India—for the Dutch at the Cape were but the tools of the First Consul: by the latter we left Malta as the sole barrier against a renewed land attack on our Eastern possessions. The safety of our East Indian possessions was really at stake, and yet Europe was asked to believe that the question was whether England would or would not evacuate Malta. This was the French statement of the case: it was met by the British plea that France, having declared her acceptance of the principle of compensation for us, had no cause for objecting to the retention of an island so vital to our interests.

Yet, while convinced of the immense importance of Malta, the Addington Cabinet did not insist on retaining it, if the French Government would "suggest some other *equivalent security* by which His Majesty's object in claiming the permanent possession of Malta may be accomplished and the independence of the island secured conformably to the spirit of the 10th Article of the Treaty of Amiens."[1] To the First Consul was therefore left the initiative in proposing some other plan which would safeguard British interests in the Levant; and, with this qualifying explanation, the British ambassador was charged to present to him the following proposals for a new treaty: Malta to remain in British hands, the Knights to be indemnified for any losses of property which they may thereby sustain: Holland and Switzerland to be evacuated by French troops: the island of Elba to be confirmed to France, and the King of Etruria to be acknowledged by Great Britain: the Italian and Ligurian Republics also to be acknowledged, if "an

[1] Lord Hawkesbury to Lord Whitworth, April 4th, 1803.

arrangement is made in Italy for the King of Sardinia, which shall be satisfactory to him."

Lord Whitworth judged it better not to present these demands point blank, but gradually to reveal their substance. This course, he judged, would be less damaging to the friends of peace at the Tuileries, and less likely to affront Napoleon. But it was all one and the same. The First Consul, in his present state of highly wrought tension, practically ignored the suggestion of an *equivalent security*, and declaimed against the perfidy of England for daring to infringe the treaty, though he had offered no opposition to the Czar's proposals respecting Malta, which weakened the stability of the Order and sensibly modified that same treaty.

Talleyrand was more conciliatory; and there is little doubt that, had the First Consul allowed his brother Joseph and his Foreign Minister wider powers, the crisis might have been peaceably passed. Joseph Bonaparte urgently pressed Whitworth to be satisfied with Corfu or Crete in place of Malta; but he confessed that the suggestion was quite unauthorized, and that the First Consul was so enraged on the Maltese Question that he dared not broach it to him.[1] Indeed, all through these critical weeks Napoleon's relations to his brothers were very strained, they desiring peace in Europe so that Louisiana might even now be saved to France, while the First Consul persisted in his oriental schemes. He seems now to have concentrated his energies on the task of postponing the rupture to a convenient date and of casting on his foes the odium of the approaching war. He made no proposal that could reassure Britain as to the security of the overland routes; and he named no other island which could be considered as an equivalent to Malta.

To many persons his position has seemed logically unassailable; but it is difficult to see how this view can be held. The Treaty of Amiens had twice over been rendered, in a technical sense, null and void by the

[1] Despatches of April 11th and 18th, 1803.

action of Continental Powers. Russia and Prussia had not guaranteed the state of things arranged for Malta by that treaty; and the action of France and Spain in confiscating the property of the Knights in their respective lands had so far sapped the strength of the Order that it could never again support the expense of the large garrison which the lines around Valetta required.

In a military sense, this was the crux of the problem; for no one affected to believe that Malta was rendered secure by the presence at Valetta of 2,000 troops of the King of Naples, whose realm could within a week be overrun by Murat's division. This obvious difficulty led Lord Hawkesbury to urge, in his notes of April 13th and later, that British troops should garrison the chief fortifications of Valetta and leave the civil power to the Knights: or, if that were found objectionable, that we should retain complete possession of the island for ten years, provided that we were left free to negotiate with the King of Naples for the cession of Lampedusa, an islet to the west of Malta. To this last proposal the First Consul offered no objection; but he still inflexibly opposed any retention of Malta, even for ten years, and sought to make the barren islet of Lampedusa appear an equivalent to Malta. This absurd contention had, however, been exploded by Talleyrand's indiscreet confession "that the re-establishment of the Order of St. John was not so much the point to be discussed as that of suffering Great Britain to acquire a *possession in the Mediterranean.*"[1]

This, indeed, was the pith and marrow of the whole question, whether Great Britain was to be excluded from that great sea—save at Gibraltar and Lampedusa—looking on idly at its transformation into a French lake by the seizure of Corfu, the Morea, Egypt, and Malta itself; or whether she should retain some hold on the overland route to the East. The difficulty was frankly pointed out by Lord Whitworth; it was as frankly admitted by Joseph Bonaparte; it was recognized by Talleyrand; and Napoleon's desire for a durable peace must have been

[1] Whitworth to Hawkesbury, April 23rd.

slight when he refused to admit England's claim effectively to safeguard her interests in the Levant, and ever fell back on the literal fulfilment of a treaty which had been invalidated by his own deliberate actions.

Affairs now rapidly came to a climax. On April 23rd the British Government notified its ambassador that, if the present terms were not granted within seven days of his receiving them, he was to leave Paris. Napoleon was no less angered than surprised by the recent turn of events. In place of timid complaisance which he had expected from Addington, he was met with open defiance; but he now proposed that the Czar should offer his intervention between the disputants. The suggestion was infinitely skilful. It flattered the pride of the young autocrat and promised to yield gains as substantial as those which Russian mediation had a year before procured for France from the intimidated Sultan; it would help to check the plans for an Anglo-Russian alliance then being mooted at St. Petersburg, and, above all, it served to gain time.

All these advantages were to a large extent realized. Though the Czar had been the first to suggest our retention of Malta, he now began to waver. The clearness and precision of Talleyrand's notes, and the telling charge of perfidy against England, made an impression which the cumbrous retorts of Lord Hawkesbury and the sailor-like diplomacy of Admiral Warren failed to efface.[1] And the Russian Chancellor, Vorontzoff, though friendly to England, and desirous of seeing her firmly established at Malta, now began to complain of the want of clearness in her policy. The Czar emphasized this complaint, and suggested that, as Malta could not be the real cause of dispute, the British Government should formulate distinctly its grievances and so set the matter in train for a

[1] Czartoryski ("Mems.," vol. i., ch. xiii.) calls him "an excellent admiral but an indifferent diplomatist—a perfect representative of the nullity and incapacity of the Addington Ministry which had appointed him. The English Government was seldom happy in its ambassadors." So Earl Minto's "Letters," vol. iii., p. 279.

settlement. The suggestion was not complied with. To draw up a long list of complaints, some drawn from secret sources and exposing the First Consul's schemes, would have exasperated his already ruffled temper; and the proposal can only be regarded as an adroit means of justifying Alexander's sudden change of front.

Meanwhile events had proceeded apace at Paris. On April 26th Joseph Bonaparte made a last effort to bend his brother's will, but only gained the grudging concession that Napoleon would never consent to the British retention of Malta for a longer time than three or four years. As this would have enabled him to postpone the rupture long enough to mature his oriental plans, it was rejected by Lord Whitworth, who insisted on ten years as the minimum. The evident determination of the British Government speedily to terminate the affair, one way or the other, threw Napoleon into a paroxysm of passion; and at the diplomatic reception of May 1st, from which Lord Whitworth discreetly absented himself, he vehemently inveighed against its conduct. Fretted by the absence of our ambassador, for whom this sally had been intended, he returned to St. Cloud, and there dictated this curious epistle to Talleyrand:

"I desire that your conference [with Lord Whitworth] shall not degenerate into a conversation. Show yourself cold, reserved, and even somewhat proud. If the [British] note contains the word *ultimatum* make him feel that this word implies war; if it does not contain this word, make him insert it, remarking to him that we must know where we are, that we are tired of this state of anxiety. . . . Soften down a little at the end of the conference, and invite him to return before writing to his Court."

But this careful rehearsal was to avail nothing; our stolid ambassador was not to be cajoled, and on May 2nd, that is, seven days after his presenting our ultimatum, he sent for his passports. He did not, however, set out immediately. Yielding to an urgent request, he delayed his departure in order to hear the French reply

to the British ultimatum.[1] It notified sarcastically that Lampedusa was not in the First Consul's power to bestow, that any change with reference to Malta must be referred by Great Britain to the Great Powers for their concurrence, and that Holland would be evacuated as soon as the terms of the Treaty of Amiens were complied with. Another proposal was that Malta should be transferred to Russia—the very step which was proposed at Amiens and was rejected by the Czar: on that account Lord Whitworth now refused it as being merely a device to gain time. The sending of his passports having been delayed, he received one more despatch from Downing Street, which allowed that our retention of Malta for ten years should form a secret article—a device which would spare the First Consul's susceptibilities on the point of honour. Even so, however, Napoleon refused to consider a longer tenure than two or three years. And in this he was undoubtedly encouraged by the recent despatch from St. Petersburg, wherein the Czar promised his mediation in a sense favourable to France. This unfortunate occurrence completed the discomfiture of the peace party at the Consular Court, and in a long and heated discussion in a council held at St. Cloud on May 11th all but Joseph Bonaparte and Talleyrand voted for the rejection of the British demands.

On the next day Lord Whitworth left Paris. During his journey to Calais he received one more proposal, that France should hold the peninsula of Otranto for ten years if Great Britain retained Malta for that period; but if this suggestion was made in good faith, which is doubtful, its effect was destroyed by a rambling diatribe which Talleyrand, at his master's orders, sent shortly afterwards.[2] In any case it was looked upon by our ambassador as a last attempt to gain time for the con-

[1] See Lord Malmesbury's "Diaries" (vol. iv., p. 253) as to the bad results of Whitworth's delay.

[2] Note of May 12th, 1803: see "England and Napoleon," p. 249.

centration of the French naval forces. He crossed the Straits of Dover on May 17th, the day after the British declaration of war was issued.

On May 22nd, 1803, appeared at Paris the startling order that, as British frigates had captured two French merchantmen on the Breton coast, all Englishmen between eighteen and sixty years of age who were in France should be detained as prisoners of war. The pretext for this unheard-of action, which condemned some 10,000 Britons to prolonged detention, was that the two French ships were seized prior to the declaration of war. This is false: they were seized on May 20th, that is, four days after the British Government had declared war, three days after an embargo had been laid on British vessels in French ports, and seven days after the First Consul had directed his envoy at Florence to lay an embargo on English ships in the ports of Tuscany.[1] It is therefore obvious that Napoleon's barbarous decree merely marked his disappointment at the failure of his efforts to gain time and to deal the first stroke. How sorely his temper was tried by the late events is clear from the recital of the Duchesse d'Abrantès, who relates that her husband, when ordered to seize English residents, found the First Consul in a fury, his eyes flashing fire; and when Junot expressed his reluctance to carry out this decree, Napoleon passionately exclaimed: "Do not trust too far to my friendship: as soon as I conceive doubt as to yours, mine is gone."

Few persons in England now cherished any doubts as to the First Consul's hatred of the nation which stood between him and his oriental designs. Ministers alone knew the extent of those plans: but every ploughboy could feel the malice of an act which cooped up innocent travellers on the flimsiest of pretexts. National ardour, and, alas, national hatred were deeply stirred.[2] The

[1] "Corresp.," vol. viii., No. 6743.

[2] See Romilly's letter to Dumont, May 31st, 1803 ("Memoirs," vol. i.).

Whigs, who had paraded the clemency of Napoleon, were at once helpless, and found themselves reduced to impotence for wellnigh a generation; and the Tories, who seemed the exponents of a national policy, were left in power until the stream of democracy, dammed up by war in 1793 and again in 1803, asserted its full force in the later movement for reform.

Yet the opinion often expressed by pamphleteers, that the war of 1803 was undertaken to compel France to abandon her republican principles, is devoid of a shred of evidence in its favour. After 1802 there were no French republican principles to be combated; they had already been jettisoned; and, since Bonaparte had crushed the Jacobins, his personal claims were favourably regarded at Whitehall, Addington even assuring the French envoy that he would welcome the establishment of hereditary succession in the First Consul's family.[1] But while Bonaparte's own conduct served to refute the notion that the war of 1803 was a war of principles, his masterful policy in Europe and the Levant convinced every well-informed man that peace was impossible; and the rupture was accompanied by acts and insults to the "nation of shopkeepers" that could be avenged only by torrents of blood. Diatribes against perfidious Albion filled the French Press and overflowed into splenetic pamphlets, one of which bade odious England tremble under the consciousness of her bad faith and the expectation of swift and condign chastisement. Such was the spirit in which these natious rushed to arms; and the conflict was scarcely to cease until Napoleon was flung out into the solitudes of the southern Atlantic.

The importance of the rupture of the Peace of Amiens will be realized if we briefly survey Bonaparte's position

[1] "Lettres inédites de Talleyrand," November 3rd, 1802. In his letter of May 3rd, 1803, to Lord Whitworth, M. Huber reports Fouché's outspoken warning in the Senate to Bonaparte: "Vous êtes vous-même, ainsi que nous, un résultat de la révolution, et la guerre remet tout en problême. On vous flatte en vous faisant compter sur les principes révolutionnaires des autres nations: *le résultat de notre révolution les a anéantis partout.*"

after that treaty was signed. He had regained for his adopted country a colonial empire and had given away not a single French island. France was raised to a position of assured strength far preferable to the perilous heights attained later on at Tilsit. In Australia there was a prospect that the tricolour would wave over areas as great and settlements as prosperous as those of New South Wales and the infant town of Sydney. From the Ile de France and the Cape of Good Hope as convenient bases of operations, British India could easily be assailed; and a Franco-Mahratta alliance promised to yield a victory over the troops of the East India Company. In Europe the imminent collapse of the Turkish Empire invited a partition, whence France might hope to gain Egypt and the Morea. The Ionian Isles were ready to accept French annexation; and, if England withdrew her troops from Malta, the fate of the weak Order of St. John could scarcely be a matter of doubt.

For the fulfilment of these bright hopes one thing alone was needed, a policy of peace and naval preparation. As yet Napoleon's navy was comparatively weak. In March, 1803, he had only forty-three line-of-battle ships, ten of which were on distant stations; but he had ordered twenty-three more to be built—ten of them in Holland; and, with the harbours of France, Holland, Flanders, and Northern Italy at his disposal, he might hope, at the close of 1804, to confront the flag of St. George with a superiority of force. That was the time which his secret instructions to Decaen marked out for the outbreak of the war that would yield to the tricolour a world-wide supremacy.

These schemes miscarried owing to the impetuosity of their contriver. Hustled out of the arena of European politics, and threatened with French supremacy in the other Continents, England forthwith drew the sword; and her action, cutting athwart the far-reaching web of the Napoleonic intrigues, forced France to forego her oceanic plans, to muster her forces on the Straits of Dover, and thereby to yield to the English race the

supremacy in Louisiana, India, and Australia, leaving also the destinies of Egypt to be decided in a later age. Viewed from the standpoint of racial expansion, the renewal of war in 1803 is the greatest event of the century.

[Since this chapter was printed, articles on the same subject have appeared in the "Revue Historique" (March-June, 1901) by M. Philippson, which take almost the same view as that here presented. I cannot, however, agree with the learned writer that Napoleon wanted war. I think he did not, *until his navy was ready;* but it was not in him to give way.]

CHAPTER XVIII

EUROPE AND THE BONAPARTES

THE disappointment felt by Napoleon at England's interruption of his designs may be measured, first by his efforts to postpone the rupture, and thereafter by the fierce energy which he threw into the war. As has been previously noted, the Czar had responded to the First Consul's appeal for mediation in notes which seemed to the British Cabinet unjustly favourable to the French case. Napoleon now offered to recognize the arbitration of the Czar on the questions in dispute, and suggested that meanwhile Malta should be handed over to Russia to be held in pledge: he on his part offered to evacuate Hanover, Switzerland, and Holland, if the British would suspend hostilities, to grant an indemnity to the King of Sardinia, to allow Britain to occupy Lampedusa, and fully to assure "the independence of Europe," if France retained her present frontiers. But when the Russian envoy, Markoff, urged him to crown these proposals by allowing Britain to hold Malta for a certain time, thereafter to be agreed upon, he firmly refused to do so on his own initiative, for that would soil his honour: but he would view with resignation its cession to Britain if that proved to be the award of Alexander. Accordingly Markoff wrote to his colleague at London, assuring him that the peace of the world was now once again assured by the noble action of the First Consul.[1]

Were these proposals prompted by a sincere desire to assure a lasting peace, or were they put forward as a

[1] A copy of this letter, with the detailed proposals, is in our Foreign Office archives (Russia, No. 52).

device to gain time for the completion of the French naval preparations? Evidently they were completely distrusted by the British Government, and with some reason. They were nearly identical with the terms formulated in the British ultimatum, which Napoleon had rejected. Moreover, our Foreign Office had by this time come to suspect Alexander. On June 23rd Lord Hawkesbury wrote that it might be most damaging to British interests to place Malta "at the hazard of the Czar's arbitration"; and he informed the Russian ambassador, Count Vorontzoff, that the aim of the French had obviously been merely to gain time, that their explanations were loose and unsatisfactory, and their demands inadmissible, and that Great Britain could not acknowledge the present territories of the French Republic as permanent while Malta was placed in arbitration. In fact, our Government feared that, when Malta had been placed in Alexander's hands, Napoleon would lure him into oriental adventures and renew the plans of an advance on India. Their fears were well founded.

Napoleon's preoccupation was always for the East: on February 21st, 1803, he had charged his Minister of Marine to send arms and ammunition to the Suliotes and Maniotes then revolting against the Sultan; and at midsummer French agents were at Ragusa to prepare for a landing at the mouth of the River Cattaro.[1] With Turkey rent by revolt, Malta placed as a pledge in Russian keeping, and Alexander drawn into the current of Napoleon's designs, what might not be accomplished? Evidently the First Consul could expect more from this course of events than from barren strifes with Nelson's ships in the Straits of Dover. For *us*, such a peace was far more risky than war. And yet, if the Czar's offer were too stiffly repelled, public opinion would everywhere be alienated, and in that has always lain half the strength of England's policy.[2] Ministers therefore declared that,

[1] Bourgeois, "Manuel de Politique Etrangère," vol. ii., p. 243.

[2] See Castlereagh's "Letters and Despatches," Second Series, vol. i., pp. 75-82, as to the need of conciliating public opinion, even

while they could not accept Russia's arbitration without appeal, they would accede to her mediation if it concerned all the causes of the present war. This reasonable proposal was accepted by the Czar, but received from Napoleon a firm refusal. He at once wrote to Talleyrand, August 23rd, 1803, directing that the Russian proposals should be made known to Haugwitz, the Prussian Foreign Minister:

"Make him see all the absurdity of it: tell him that England will never get from me any other treaty than that of Amiens: that *I will never suffer her to have anything in the Mediterranean;* that I will not treat with her about the Continent; that I am resolved to evacuate Holland and Switzerland; but that I will never stipulate this in an article."

As for Russia, he continued, she talked much about the integrity of Turkey, but was violating it by the occupation of the Ionian Isles and her constant intrigues in Wallachia. These facts were correct: but the manner in which he stated them clearly revealed his annoyance that the Czar would not wholly espouse the French cause. Talleyrand's views on this question may be seen in his letter to Bonaparte, when he assures his chief that he has now reaped from his noble advance to the Russian Emperor the sole possible advantage—"that of proving to Europe by a grand act of frankness your love of peace and to throw upon England the whole blame for the war." It is not often that a diplomatist so clearly reveals the secrets of his chief's policy.[1]

The motives of Alexander were less questionable. His chief desire at that time was to improve the lot of his people. War would disarrange these noble designs: France would inevitably overrun the weaker Continental States: England would retaliate by enforcing her severe maritime code; and the whole world would be rent in twain by this strife of the elements.

by accepting Corfu as a set-off for Malta, provided a durable peace could thus be secured.

[1] "Lettres inédites de Talleyrand," August 21st, 1803.

These gloomy forebodings were soon to be realized. Holland was the first to suffer. And yet one effort was made to spare her the horrors of war. Filled with commiseration for her past sufferings, the British Government at once offered to respect her neutrality, provided that the French troops would evacuate her fortresses and exact no succour either in ships, men, or money.[1] But such forbearance was scarcely to be expected from Napoleon, who not only had a French division in that land, supported at its expense, but also relied on its maritime resources.[2] The proposal was at once set aside at Paris. Napoleon's decision to drag the Batavian Republic into the war arose, however, from no spasm of the war fever; it was calmly stated in the secret instructions issued to General Decaen in the preceding January. "It is now considered impossible that we could have war with England, without dragging Holland into it." Holland was accordingly once more ground between the upper and the nether millstone, between the Sea Power and the Land Power, pouring out for Napoleon its resources in men and money, and losing to the masters of the sea its ships, foreign commerce, and colonies.

Equally hard was the treatment of Naples. In spite of the Czar's plea that its neutrality might be respected, this kingdom was at once occupied by St. Cyr with troops that held the chief positions on the "heel" of Italy. This infraction of the Treaty of Florence was to be justified by a proclamation asserting that, as England had retained Malta, the balance of power required that France should hold these positions as long as England held Malta.[3] This action punished the King and Queen of Naples for their supposed subservience to English policy; and, while lightening the burdens of the French exchequer, it compelled England to keep a large fleet in the Mediterranean for the protection of Egypt, and

[1] Garden, "Traités," vol. viii., p. 191.

[2] Holland was required to furnish 16,000 troops and maintain 18,000 French, to provide 10 ships of war and 350 gunboats.

[3] "Corresp.," May 23rd, 1803.

thereby weakened her defensive powers in the Straits of Dover. To distract his foes, and compel them to extend their lines, was ever Napoleon's aim both in military and naval strategy; and the occupation of Taranto, together with the naval activity at Toulon and Genoa, left it doubtful whether the great captain determined to strike at London or to resume his eastern adventures. His previous moves all seemed to point towards Egypt and India; and the Admiralty instructions of May 18th, 1803, to Nelson, reveal the expectation of our Government that the real blow would fall on the Morea and Egypt. Six weeks later our admiral reported the activity of French intrigues in the Morea, which was doubtless intended to be their halfway house to Egypt —"when sooner or later, farewell India."[1] Proofs of Napoleon's designs on the Morea were found by Captain Keats of H.M.S. "Superb" on a French vessel that he captured, a French corporal having on him a secret letter from an agent at Corfu, dated May 23rd, 1803. It ended thus:

"I have every reason to believe that we shall soon have a revolution in the Morea, as we desire. I have close relations with Crepacchi, and we are in daily correspondence with all the chiefs of the Morea: we have even provided them with munitions of war."[2]

On the whole, however, it seems probable that Napoleon's chief aim now was London and not Egypt; but his demonstrations eastwards were so skilfully maintained as to convince both the English Government and Nelson that his real aim was Egypt or Malta. For this project the French *corps d'armée* in the "heel" of Italy held a commanding position. Ships alone were wanting; and these he sought to compel the King of Naples to furnish. As early as April 20th, 1803, our *charge d'affaires* at

[1] Nelson's letters of July 2nd. See too Mahan's "Life of Nelson," vol. ii., pp. 180-188, and Napoleon's letters of November 24th, 1803, encouraging the Mamelukes to look to France.

[2] "Foreign Office Records," Sicily and Naples, No. 55, July 25th.

Naples, Mr. à Court, reported that Napoleon was pressing on that Government a French alliance, on the ground that:

"The interests of the two countries are the same: it is the intention of France to shut every port to the English, from Holland to the Turkish dominions, to prevent the exportation of her merchandise, and to give a mortal blow to her commerce, for there she is most vulnerable. Our joint forces may wrest from her hands the island of Malta. The Sicilian navy may convoy and protect the French troops in the prosecution of such a plan, and the most happy result may be augured to their united exertions."

Possibly the King and his spirited but whimsical consort, Queen Charlotte, might have bent before the threats which accompanied this alluring offer; but at the head of the Neapolitan administration was an Englishman, General Acton, whose talents and force of will commanded their respect and confidence. To the threats of the French ambassador he answered that France was strong and Naples was weak; force might overthrow the dynasty; but nothing would induce it to violate its neutrality towards England. So unwonted a defiance aroused Napoleon to a characteristic revenge. When his troops were quartered on Southern Italy, and were draining the Neapolitan resources, the Queen wrote appealing to his clemency on behalf of her much burdened people. In reply he assured her of his desire to be agreeable to her: but how could he look on Naples as a neutral State, when its chief Minister was an Englishman? This was "the real reason that justified all the measures taken towards Naples."[1] The brutality and falseness of this reply had no other effect than to embitter Queen Charlotte's hatred against the arbiter of the world's destinies, before whom she and her consort refused to bow, even when, three years later, they were forced to seek shelter behind the girdle of the inviolate sea.

[1] Letter of July 28th, 1803.

Hanover also fell into Napoleon's hands. Mortier with 25,000 French troops speedily overran that land and compelled the Duke of Cambridge to a capitulation. The occupation of the Electorate not only relieved the French exchequer of the support of a considerable corps; it also served to hold in check the Prussian Court, always preoccupied about Hanover; and it barred the entrance of the Elbe and Weser to British ships, an aim long cherished by Napoleon. To this we retorted by blockading the mouths of those rivers, an act which must have been expected by Napoleon, and which enabled him to declaim against British maritime tyranny. In truth, the beginnings of the Continental System were now clearly discernible. The shores of the Continent from the south of Italy to the mouth of the Elbe were practically closed to English ships, while by a decree of July 15th *any vessel whatsoever* that had cleared from a British port was to be excluded from all harbours of the French Republic. Thus all commercial nations were compelled, slowly but inevitably, to side with the master of the land or the mistress of the seas.

In vain did the King of Prussia represent to Napoleon that Hanover was not British territory, and that the neutrality of Germany was infringed and its interests damaged by the French occupation of Hanover and Cuxhaven. His protest was met by an offer from Napoleon to evacuate Hanover, Taranto and Otranto, only at the time when England should "evacuate Malta and the Mediterranean"; and though the special Prussian envoy, Lombard, reported to his master that Napoleon was "truth, loyalty, and friendship personified," yet he received not a word that betokened real regard for the susceptibilities of Frederick William III. or the commerce of his people.[1] For the present, neither King nor Czar ventured on further remonstrances; but the First Consul had sown seeds of discord which were to bear fruit in the Third Coalition.

Having quartered 60,000 French troops on Naples

[1] "Nap. Corresp.," August 23rd, 1803, and Oncken, ch. v.

and Hanover, Napoleon could face with equanimity the costs of the war. Gigantic as they were, they could be met from the purchase money of Louisiana, the taxation and voluntary gifts of the French dominions, the subsidies of the Italian and Ligurian Republics, and a contribution which he now exacted from Spain.

Even before the outbreak of hostilities he had significantly reminded Charles IV. that the Spanish marine was deteriorating, and her arsenals and dockyards were idle: "But England is not asleep; she is ever on the watch and will never rest until she has seized on the colonies and commerce of the world." [1] For the present, however, the loss of Trinidad and the sale of Louisiana rankled too deeply to admit of Spain entering into another conflict, whence, as before, Napoleon would doubtless gain the glory and leave to her the burden of territorial sacrifices. In spite of his shameless relations to the Queen of Spain, Godoy, the Spanish Minister, was not devoid of patriotism; and he strove to evade the obligations which the treaty of 1796 imposed on Spain in case of an Anglo-French conflict. He embodied the militia of the north of Spain and doubtless would have defied Bonaparte's demands, had Russia and Prussia shown any disposition to resist French aggressions. But those Powers were as yet wholly devoted to private interests; and when Napoleon threatened Charles IV. and Godoy with an inroad of 80,000 French troops unless the Spanish militia were dissolved and 72,000,000 francs were paid every year into the French exchequer, the Court of Madrid speedily gave way. Its surrender was further assured by the thinly veiled threat that further resistance would lead to the exposure of the *liaison* between Godoy and the Queen. Spain therefore engaged to pay the required sum—more than double the amount stipulated in 1796—to further the interests of French commerce and to bring pressure to bear on Portugal. At the close of the year the Court of Lisbon, yielding to the threats of France and Spain, consented to purchase its neutrality by the pay-

[1] "Corresp.," vol. viii., No. 6627.

ment of a million francs a month to the master of the Continent.[1]

Meanwhile the First Consul was throwing his untiring energies into the enterprise of crushing his redoubtable foe. He pushed on the naval preparations at all the dockyards of France, Holland, and North Italy; the great mole that was to shelter the roadstead at Cherbourg was hurried forward, and the coast from the Seine to the Rhine became "a coast of iron and bronze" —to use Marmont's picturesque phrase—while every harbour swarmed with small craft destined for an invasion. Troops were withdrawn from the Rhenish frontiers and encamped along the shores of Picardy; others were stationed in reserve at St. Omer, Montreuil, Bruges, and Utrecht; while smaller camps were formed at Ghent, Compiègne, and St. Malo. The banks of the Elbe, Weser, Scheldt, Somme, and Seine—even as far up as Paris itself—rang with the blows of shipwrights labouring to strengthen the flotilla of flat-bottomed vessels designed for the invasion of England. Troops, to the number of 50,000 at Boulogne under Soult, 30,000 at Etaples, and as many at Bruges, commanded by Ney and Davoust respectively, were organized anew, and by constant drill and exposure to the elements formed the tough nucleus of the future Grand Army, before which the choicest troops of Czar and Kaiser were to be scattered in headlong rout. To all these many-sided exertions of organization and drill, of improving harbours and coast fortifications, of ship-building, testing, embarking, and disembarking, the First Consul now and again applied the spur of his personal supervision; for while the warlike enthusiasm which he had aroused against perfidious Albion of itself achieved wonders, yet work was never so strenuous and exploits so daring as under the eyes of the great captain himself. He therefore paid frequent visits to the north coast, surveying with critical eyes the works at Boulogne, Calais, Dunkirk,

[1] Lefebvre, "Cabinets de l'Europe," ch. viii.; "Nap. Corresp.," vol. viii., Nos. 6979, 6985, 7007, 7098, 7113.

Ostend, and Antwerp. The last-named port engaged his special attention. Its position at the head of the navigable estuary of the Scheldt, exactly opposite the Thames, marked it out as the natural rival of London; he now encouraged its commerce and ordered the construction of a dockyard fitted to contain twenty-five battleships and a proportionate number of frigates and sloops. Antwerp was to become the great commercial and naval emporium of the North Sea. The time seemed to favour the design; Hamburg and Bremen were blockaded, and London for a space was menaced by the growing power of the First Consul, who seemed destined to restore to the Flemish port the prosperity which the savagery of Alva had swept away with such profit to Elizabethan London. But grand as were Napoleon's enterprises at Antwerp, they fell far short of his ulterior designs. He told Las Cases at St. Helena that the dockyard and magazines were to have been protected by a gigantic fortress built on the opposite side of the River Scheldt, and that Antwerp was to have been "a loaded pistol held at the head of England."

In both lands warlike ardour rose to the highest pitch. French towns and Departments freely offered gifts of gunboats and battleships. And in England public men vied with one another in their eagerness to equip and maintain volunteer regiments. Wordsworth, who had formerly sung the praises of the French Revolution, thus voiced the national defiance:

> "No parleying now! In Britain is one breath;
> We all are with you now from shore to shore;
> Ye men of Kent, 'tis victory or death."

In one respect England enjoyed a notable advantage. Having declared war before Napoleon's plans were matured, she held the command of the seas, even against the naval resources of France, Holland, and North Italy. The first months of the war witnessed the surrender of St. Lucia and Tobago to our fleets; and before the close of the year Berbice, Demerara, Essequibo, together with

nearly the whole of the French St. Domingo force, had capitulated to the Union Jack. Our naval supremacy in the Channel now told with full effect. Frigates were ever on the watch in the Straits to chase any French vessels that left port. But our chief efforts were to blockade the enemy's ships. Despite constant ill-health and frequent gales, Nelson clung to Toulon. Admiral Cornwallis cruised off Brest with a fleet generally exceeding fifteen sail of the line and several smaller vessels: six frigates and smaller craft protected the coast of Ireland; six line-of-battle ships and twenty-three lesser vessels were kept in the Downs under Lord Keith as a central reserve force, to which the news of all events transpiring on the enemy's coast was speedily conveyed by despatch boats; the newly invented semaphore telegraphs were also systematically used between the Isle of Wight and Deal to convey news along the coast and to London. Martello towers were erected along the coast from Harwich to Pevensey Bay, at the points where a landing was easy. Numerous inventors also came forward with plans for destroying the French flotilla, but none was found to be serviceable except the rockets of Colonel Congreve, which inflicted some damage at Boulogne and elsewhere. Such were the dispositions of our chief naval forces: they comprised 469 ships of war, and over 700 armed boats, of all sizes.[1]

Our regular troops and militia mustered 180,000 strong; while the volunteers, including 120,000 men armed with pikes or similar weapons, numbered 410,000. Of course little could be hoped from these last in a conflict with French veterans; and even the regulars, in the absence of any great generals—for Wellesley was then in India—might have offered but a poor resistance to Napoleon's military machine. Preparations were, however, made for a desperate resistance. Plans were quietly framed for the transfer of the Queen and the royal family

[1] The French and Dutch ships in commission were: ships of the line, 48; frigates, 37; corvettes, 22; gun-brigs, etc., 124; flotilla, 2,115. (See "Mems. of the Earl of St. Vincent," vol. ii., p. 218.)

to Worcester, along with the public treasure, which was to be lodged in the cathedral; while the artillery and stores from Woolwich arsenal were to be conveyed into the Midlands by the Grand Junction Canal.[1]

The scheme of coast-defence which General Dundas had drawn up in 1796 was now again set in action. It included, not only the disposition of the armed forces, but plans for the systematic removal of all provisions, stores, animals, and fodder from the districts threatened by the invader; and it is clear that the country was far better prepared than French writers have been willing to admit. Indeed, so great was the expense of these defensive preparations that, when Nelson's return from the West Indies disconcerted the enemy's plans, Fox merged the statesman in the partisan by the curious assertion that the invasion scare had been got up by the Pitt Ministry for party purposes.[2] Few persons shared that opinion. The nation was animated by a patriotism such as had never yet stirred the sluggish veins of Georgian England. The Jacobinism, which Dundas in 1796 had lamented as paralyzing the nation's energy, had wholly vanished; and the fatality which dogged the steps of Napoleon was already discernible. The mingled hatred and fear which he inspired outside France was beginning to solidify the national resistance: after uniting rich and poor, English and Scots in a firm phalanx in the United Kingdom, the national principle was in turn to vivify Spain, Russia, and Germany, and thus to assure his overthrow.

Reserving for consideration in another chapter the later developments of the naval war, it will be convenient now to turn to important events in the history of the Bonaparte family.

The loves and intrigues of the Bonapartes have furnished material enough to fill several volumes devoted to light gossip, and naturally so. Given an ambitious family, styled *parvenus* by the ungenerous, shooting aloft

[1] Pellew's "Life of Lord Sidmouth," vol. ii., p. 239.
[2] Stanhope's "Life of Pitt," vol. iv., p. 213.

swiftly as the flames of Vesuvius, ardent as its inner fires, and stubborn as its hardened lava—given also an imperious brother determined to marry his younger brothers and sisters, not as they willed, but as he willed —and it is clear that materials are at hand sufficient to make the fortunes of a dozen comediettas.

To the marriage of Pauline Bonaparte only the briefest reference need here be made. The wild humour of her blood showed itself before her first marriage; and after the death of her husband, General Leclerc, in San Domingo, she privately espoused Prince Borghese before the legal time of mourning had expired, an indiscretion which much annoyed Napoleon (August, 1803). Ultimately this brilliant, frivolous creature resided in the splendid mansion which now forms the British embassy in Paris. The case of Louis Bonaparte was somewhat different. Nurtured as he had been in his early years by Napoleon, he had rewarded him by contracting a dutiful match with Hortense Beauharnais (January, 1802); but that union was to be marred by a grotesquely horrible jealousy which the young husband soon conceived for his powerful brother.

For the present, however, the chief trouble was caused by Lucien, whose address had saved matters at the few critical minutes of Brumaire. Gifted with a strong vein of literary feeling and oratorical fire he united in his person the obstinacy of a Bonaparte, the headstrong feelings of a poet, and the dogmatism of a Corsican republican. His presumptuous conduct had already embroiled him with the First Consul, who deprived him of his Ministry and sent him as ambassador to Madrid.[1] He further sinned, first by hurrying on peace with Portugal—it is said for a handsome present from Lisbon—and later by refusing to marry the widow of the King of Etruria. In this he persisted, despite the urgent representations of Napoleon and Joseph: "You know very well that I am a republican, and that a queen is not what suits me, an ugly queen too!"—"What a pity your answer was

[1] Roederer, "Œuvres," vol. iii., p. 348; Méneval, vol. i., ch. iv.

PAULINE BONAPARTE.

not cut short, it would have been quite Roman," sneered Joseph at his younger brother, once the Brutus of the Jacobin clubs. But Lucien was proof against all the splendours of the royal match; he was madly in love with a Madame Jouberthon, the deserted wife of a Paris stockbroker; and in order to checkmate all Napoleon's attempts to force on a hated union, he had secretly married the lady of his choice at the village of Plessis-Chamant, hard by his country house (October 26th, 1803).

The letter which divulged the news of this affair reached the First Consul at St. Cloud on an interesting occasion.[1] It was during a so-called family concert, to which only the choicest spirits had been invited, whence also, to Josephine's chagrin, Napoleon had excluded Madame Tallien and several other old friends, whose reputation would have tainted the air of religion and morality now pervading the Consular Court. While this select company was enjoying the strains of the chamber music, and Napoleon alone was dozing, Lucien's missive was handed in by the faithful if indiscreet Duroc. A change came over the scene. At once Napoleon started up, called out "Stop the music: stop," and began with nervous strides and agitated gestures to pace the hall, exclaiming "Treason! it is treason!" Round-eyed, open-mouthed wonder seized on the disconcerted musicians, the company rose in confusion, and Josephine, following her spouse, besought him to say what had happened. "What has happened—why—Lucien has married his—mistress."[2]

The secret cause for this climax of fashionable comedy is to be sought in reasons of state. The establishment of hereditary power was then being secretly and anxiously discussed. Napoleon had no heirs: Joseph's children were girls: Lucien's first marriage also had naught but

[1] Lucien ("Mems.," vol. iii., pp. 315-320) says at Malmaison; but Napoleon's "Correspondance" shows that it was at St. Cloud. Masson ("Nap. et sa Famille," ch. xii.) throws doubt on the story.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 318. The scene was described by Murat: the real phrase was *coquine*, but it was softened down by Murat to *maîtresse*.

female issue: the succession must therefore devolve on Lucien's children by a second marriage. But a natural son had already been born to him by Madame Jouberthon; and his marriage now promised to make this bastard the heir to the future French imperial throne. That was the reason why Napoleon paced the hall at St. Cloud, "waving his arms like a semaphore," and exclaiming "treason!" Failing the birth of sons to the two elder brothers, Lucien's marriage seriously endangered the foundation of a Napoleonic dynasty; besides, the whole affair would yield excellent sport to the royalists of the Boulevard St. Germain, the snarling Jacobins of the back streets, and the newspaper writers of hated Albion.

In vain were negotiations set on foot to make Lucien divorce his wife. The attempt only produced exasperation, Joseph himself finally accusing Napoleon of bad faith in the course of this affair. In the following springtime Lucien shook off the dust of France from his feet, and declared in a last letter to Joseph that he departed, hating Napoleon. The moral to this curious story was well pointed by Joseph Bonaparte: "Destiny seems to blind us, and intends, by means of our own faults, to restore France some day to her former rulers." [1]

At the very time of the scene at St. Cloud, fortune was preparing for the First Consul another matrimonial trouble. His youngest brother, Jerome, then aged nineteen years, had shown much aptitude for the French navy, and was serving on the American station, when a quarrel with the admiral sent him flying in disgust to the shore. There, at Baltimore, he fell in love with Miss Paterson, the daughter of a well-to-do merchant, and sought her hand in marriage. In vain did the French consul remind him that, were he five years older, he would still need the consent of his mother. The headstrong nature of his race brooked no opposition, and he secretly espoused the young lady at her father's residence. Na-

[1] Miot de Melito, "Mems.," vol. i., ch. xv. Lucien settled in the Papal States, where he, the quondam Jacobin and proven libertine, later on received from the Pope the title of Prince de Canino.

poleon's ire fell like a blasting wind on the young couple; but after waiting some time, in hopes that the storm would blow over, they ventured to come to Europe. Thereupon Napoleon wrote to Madame Mère in these terms:

"Jerome has arrived at Lisbon with the woman with whom he lives. . . . I have given orders that Miss Paterson is to be sent back to America. . . . If he shows no inclination to wash away the dishonour with which he has stained my name, by forsaking his country's flag on land and sea for the sake of a wretched woman, I will cast him off for ever."[1]

The sequel will show that Jerome was made of softer stuff than Lucien; and, strange to say, his compliance with Napoleon's dynastic designs provided that family with the only legitimate male heirs that were destined to sustain its wavering hopes to the end of the century.

[1] "Lettres inédites de Napoléon," April 22nd, 1805.

CHAPTER XIX

THE ROYALIST PLOT

FROM domestic comedy, France turned rapidly in the early months of 1804 to a sombre tragedy—the tragedy of the Georges Cadoudal plot and the execution of the Duc d'Enghien.

There were varied reasons why the exiled French Bourbons should compass the overthrow of Napoleon. Every month that they delayed action lessened their chances of success. They had long clung to the hope that his Concordat with the Pope and other anti-revolutionary measures betokened his intention to recall their dynasty. But in February, 1803, the Comte de Provence received overtures which showed that Bonaparte had never thought of playing the part of General Monk. The exiled prince, then residing at Warsaw, was courteously but most firmly urged by the First Consul to renounce both for himself and for the other members of his House all claims to the throne of France, in return for which he would receive a pension of two million francs a year. The notion of sinking to the level of a pensionary of the French Republic touched Bourbon pride to the quick and provoked this spirited reply:

"As a descendant of St. Louis, I shall endeavour to imitate his example by respecting myself even in captivity. As successor to Francis I., I shall at least aspire to say with him: 'We have lost everything but our honour.'"

To this declaration the Comte d'Artois, his son, the Duc de Berri, Louis Philippe of Orleans, his two sons, and the two Condés gave their ardent assent; and the same

loyal response came from the young Condé, the Duc d'Enghien, dated Ettenheim, March 22nd, 1803. Little did men think when they read this last defiance to Napoleon that within a year its author would be flung into a grave in the moat of the Castle of Vincennes.

Scarcely had the echoes of the Bourbon retorts died away than the outbreak of war between England and France raised the hopes of the French royalist exiles in London; and their nimble fancy pictured the French army and nation as ready to fling themselves at the feet of Louis XVIII. The future monarch did not share these illusions. In the chilly solitudes of Warsaw he discerned matters in their true light, and prepared to wait until the vaulting ambition of Napoleon should league Europe against him. Indeed, when the plans of the forward wing in London were explained to him, with a view of enlisting his support, he deftly waved aside the embarrassing overtures by quoting the lines:

"Et pour être approuvés
De semblables projets veulent être achevés,"

a cautious reply which led his brother, then at Edinburgh, scornfully to contemn his *feebleness* as unworthy of any further confidences.[1] In truth, the Comte d'Artois, destined one day to be Charles X. of France, was not fashioned by nature for a Fabian policy of delay: not even the misfortunes of exile could instill into the watertight compartments of his brain the most elementary notions of prudence. Daring, however, attracts daring; and this prince had gathered around him in our land the most desperate of the French royalists, whose hopes, hatreds, schemes, and unending requests for British money may be scanned by the curious in some thirty

[1] Pasquier, "Mems.," vol. i., p. 167, and Boulay de la Meurthe, "Les dernières Années du duc d'Enghien," p. 299. An intriguing royalist of Neufchâtel, Fauche-Borel, had been to England in 1802 to get the help of the Addington Ministry, but failed. See Caudrillier's articles in the "Revue Historique," Nov., 1900—March, 1901.

large volumes of letters bequeathed by their factotum, the Comte de Puisaye, to the British Museum. Unfortunately this correspondence throws little light on the details of the plot which is fitly called by the name of Georges Cadoudal.

This daring Breton was, in fact, the only man of action on whom the Bourbon princes could firmly rely for an enterprise that demanded a cool head, cunning in the choice of means, and a remorseless hand. Pichegru, it is true, lived near London, but saw little of the *émigrés*, except the venerable Condé. Dumouriez also was in the great city, but his name was too generally scorned in France for his treachery in 1793 to warrant his being used. But there were plenty of swashbucklers who could prepare the ground in France, or, if fortune favoured, might strike the blow themselves; and a small committee of French royalists, which had the support of that furious royalist, Mr. Windham, M.P., began even before the close of 1802 to discuss plans for the "removal" of Bonaparte. Two of their tools, Picot and Le Bourgeois by name, plunged blindly into a plot, and were arrested soon after they set foot in France. Their boyish credulity seems to have suggested to the French authorities the sending of an agent so as to entrap not only French *émigrés*, but also English officials and Jacobinical generals.

The *agent provocateur* has at all times been a favourite tool of continental Governments: but rarely has a more finished specimen of the class been seen than Méhée de la Touche. After plying the trade of an assassin in the September massacres of 1792, and of a Jacobin spy during the Terror, he had been included by Bonaparte among the Jacobin scapegoats who expiated the Chouan outrage of Nivôse. Pining in the weariness of exile, he heard from his wife that he might be pardoned if he would perform some service for the Consular Government. At once he consented, and it was agreed that he should feign royalism, should worm himself into the secrets of the *émigrés* at London, and act as intermediary

between them and the discontented republicans of Paris.

The man who seems to have planned this scheme was the ex-Minister of Police. Fouché had lately been deprived by Bonaparte of the inquisitorial powers which he so unscrupulously used. His duties were divided between Regnier, the Grand Judge and Minister of Justice, and Réal, a Councillor of State, who watched over the internal security of France. These men had none of the ability of Fouché, nor did they know at the outset what Méhée was doing in London. It may, therefore, be assumed that Méhée was one of Fouché's creatures, whom he used to discredit his successor, and that Bonaparte welcomed this means of quickening the zeal of the official police, while he also wove his meshes round plotting *émigrés*, English officials, and French generals.[1]

Among these last there was almost chronic discontent, and Bonaparte claimed to have found out a plot whereby twelve of them should divide France into as many portions, leaving to him only Paris and its environs. If so, he never made any use of his discovery. In fact, out of this group of malcontents, Moreau, Bernadotte, Augereau, Macdonald, and others, he feared only the hostility of the first. The victor of Hohenlinden lived in sullen privacy near to Paris, refusing to present himself at the Consular Court, and showing his contempt for those who donned a courtier's uniform. He openly mocked at the Concordat; and when the Legion of Honour was instituted, he bestowed a collar of honour upon his dog. So keen was Napoleon's resentment at this raillery that he even proposed to send him a challenge to a duel in the Bois de Boulogne.[2] The challenge, of course, was not sent; a show of reconciliation was assumed between the two warriors; but Napoleon retained a covert dislike of the man whose

[1] Madelin's "Fouché," vol. i., p. 368, minimizes Fouché's *rôle* here.

[2] Desmarest, "Témoignages historiques," pp. 78-82.

brusque republicanism was applauded by a large portion of the army and by the *frondeurs* of Paris.

The ruin of Moreau, and the confusion alike of French royalists and of the British Ministry, could now be assured by the encouragement of a Jacobin-Royalist conspiracy, in which English officials should be implicated. Moreau was notoriously incapable in the sphere of political intrigue: the royalist coteries in London presented just the material on which the *agent provocateur* delights to work; and some British officials could, doubtless, with equal ease be drawn into the toils. Méhée de la Touche has left a highly spiced account of his adventures; but it must, of course, be received with distrust.[1]

Proceeding first to Guernsey, he gained the confidence of the Governor, General Doyle; and, fortified by recommendations from him, he presented himself to the *émigrés* at London, and had an interview with Lord Hawkesbury and the Under-Secretaries of State, Messrs. Hammond and Yorke. He found it easy to inflame the imagination of the French exiles, who clutched at the proposed union between the irreconcilables, the extreme royalists, and the extreme republicans; and it was forthwith arranged that Napoleon's power, which rested on the support of the peasants, in fact of the body of France, should be crushed by an enveloping move of the tips of the wings.

Méhée's narrative contains few details and dates, such as enable one to test his assertions. But I have examined the Puisaye Papers,[2] and also the Foreign and Home Office archives, and have found proofs of the complicity of our Government, which it will be well to present here connectedly. Taken singly they are inconclusive, but collectively their importance is considerable. In our Foreign Office Records (France, No 70) there is a letter, dated London, August 30th, 1803, from the Baron de Roll, the factotum of the exiled Bourbons, to Mr. Hammond, our Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, asking

[1] "Alliance des Jacobins de France avec le Ministère Anglais."
[2] Brit. Mus., "Add. MSS.," Nos. 7976 *et seq.*

him to call on the Comte d'Artois at his residence, No. 46, Baker Street. That the deliberations at that house were not wholly peaceful appears from a long secret memorandum of October 24th, 1803, in which the Comte d'Artois reviews the career of "that *miserable adventurer*" (Bonaparte), so as to prove that his present position is precarious and tottering. He concludes by naming those who desired his overthrow—Moreau, Reynier, Bernadotte, Simon, Masséna, Lannes, and Férino: Sieyès, Carnot, Chénier, Fouché, Barras, Tallien, Rewbel, Lamarque, and Jean de Bry. Others would not attack him "corps à corps," but disliked his supremacy. These two papers prove that our Government was aware of the Bourbon plot. Another document, dated London, November 18th, 1803, proves its active complicity. It is a list of the French royalist officers "who had set out or were ready to set out." All were in our pay, two at six shillings, five at four shillings, and nine at two shillings a day. It would be indelicate to reveal the names, but among them occurs that of Joachim P. J. Cadoudal. The list is drawn up and signed by Frieding—a name that was frequently used by Pichegru as an *alias*. In his handwriting also is a list of "royalist officers for whom I demand a year's pay in advance"—five generals, thirteen *chefs de légion*, seventeen *chefs de bataillon*, and nineteen captains. The pay claimed amounts to £3,110 15*s*.[1] That some, at least, of our Admiralty officials also aided Cadoudal is proved by a "most secret" letter, dated Admiralty Office, July 31st, 1803, from E. N[epean] to Admiral Montagu in the Downs, charging him to help the bearer, Captain Wright, in the execution of "a very important service," and to provide for him "one of the best of the hired cutters or luggers under your orders." Another "most secret" Admiralty letter, of January 9th, 1804, orders a

[1] In our Records (France, No. 71) is a letter of Count Descars, dated London, March 25th, 1805, to Lord Mulgrave, Minister for War, rendering an account for various sums advanced by our Government for the royalist "army."

frigate or large sloop to be got ready to convey secretly "an officer of rank and consideration" (probably Pichegru) to the French coast. Wright carried over the conspirators in several parties, until chance threw him into Napoleon's power and consigned him to an ignominious death, probably suicide.

Finally, there is the letter of Mr. Arbuthnot, Parliamentary Secretary at the Foreign Office (dated March 12th, 1804), to Sir Arthur Paget, in which he refers to the "sad result of all our fine projects for the re-establishment of the Bourbons: . . . we are, of course, greatly apprehensive for poor Moreau's safety."[1]

In face of this damning evidence the ministerial denials of complicity must be swept aside.[2] It is possible, however, that the plot was connived at, not by the more respectable chiefs, but by young and hot-headed officials. Even in the summer of 1803 that Cabinet was already tottering under the attacks of the Whigs and the followers of Pitt. The blandly respectable Addington and Hawkesbury with his "vacant grin"[3] were evidently no match for Napoleon; and Arbuthnot himself dubs Addington "a poor wretch universally despised and laught at," and pronounces the Cabinet "the most inefficient that ever curst a country." I judge, therefore, that our official aid to the conspirators was limited to the Under-Secretaries of the Foreign, War, and Admiralty Offices. Moreover, the royalist plans, *as revealed to our officials*, mainly concerned a rising in Normandy and Brittany. Our Government would not have paid the salaries of fifty-four royalist

[1] "Paget Papers," vol. ii., p. 96.

[2] "Parl. Debates," April, 1804 (esp. April 16th). The official denial is, of course, accepted by Alison, ch. xxxviii.

[3] The expression is that of George III., who further remarked that all the ambassadors despised Hawkesbury. (Rose, "Diaries," vol. ii., p. 157.) Windham's letter, dated Beaconsfield, August 16th, 1803, in the Puisaye Papers, warned the French *émigrés* that they must not count on any aid from Ministers, who had "at all times shown such feebleness of spirit, that they can scarcely dare to lift their eyes to such aims as you indicate. ("Add. MSS.," No. 7976.)

officers—many of them of good old French families—if it had been only a question of stabbing Napoleon. The lists of those officers were drawn up here in November, 1803, that is, three months after Georges Cadoudal had set out for Normandy and Paris to collect his desperadoes; and it seems most probable that the officers of the "royal army" were expected merely to clinch Cadoudal's enterprise by rekindling the flame of revolt in the north and west. French agents were trying to do the same in Ireland, and a plot for the murder of George III. was thought to have been connived at by the French authorities. But, when all is said, the British Government must stand accused of one of the most heinous of crimes. The whole truth was not known at Paris; but it was surmised; and the surmise was sufficient to envenom the whole course of the struggle between England and Napoleon.

Having now established the responsibility of British officials in this, the most famous plot of the century, we return to describe the progress of the conspiracy and the arts employed by Napoleon to defeat it. His tool, Méhée de la Touche, after entrapping French royalists and some of our own officials in London, proceeded to the Continent in order to inveigle some of our envoys. He achieved a brilliant success. He called at Munich, in order, as he speciously alleged, to arrange with our ambassador there the preparations for the royalist plot. The British envoy, who bore the honoured name of Francis Drake, was a zealous intriguer closely in touch with the *émigrés:* he was completely won over by the arts of Méhée: he gave the spy money, supplied him with a code of false names, and even intrusted him with a recipe for sympathetic ink. Thus furnished, Méhée proceeded to Paris, sent his briber a few harmless bulletins, took his information to the police, and, *at Napoleon's dictation*, gave him news that seriously misled our Government and Nelson.[1]

[1] See in chapter xxi., p. 488. Our envoy, Spencer Smith, at Stuttgart, was also taken in by a French spy, Captain Rosey,

The same trick was tried on Stuart, our ambassador at Vienna, who had a tempting offer from a French agent to furnish news from every French despatch to or from Vienna. Stuart had closed with the offer, when suddenly the man was seized at the instance of the French ambassador, and his papers were searched.[1] In this case there were none that compromised Stuart, and his career was not cut short in the ignominious manner that befell Drake, over whom there may be inscribed as epitaph the warning which Talleyrand gave to young aspirants—"et surtout pas trop de zèle."

Thus, while the royalists were conspiring the overthrow of Napoleon, he through his agents was countermining their clumsy approach to his citadel, and prepared to blow them sky high when their mines were crowded for the final rush. The royalist plans matured slowly owing to changes which need not be noticed. Georges Cadoudal quitted London, and landed at Biville, a smuggler's haunt not far from Dieppe, on August 23rd, 1803. Thence he made his way to Paris, and spent some months in striving to enlist trusty recruits. It has been stated that the plot never aimed at assassination, but at the overpowering of the First Consul's escort, and the seizure of his person, during one of his journeys. Then he was to be forcibly transferred to the northern coast on relays of horses, and hurried over to England.[2] But, though the plotters threw the veil of decency over their enterprise by calling it kidnapping, they undoubtedly meant murder. Among Drake's papers there is a hint that the royalist emissaries were *at first* to speak only of the seizure and deportation of the First Consul.

Whatever may have been their precise aims, they were certainly known to Napoleon and his police. On November 1st, 1803, he wrote to Regnier:

whose actions were directed by Napoleon. See his letter (No. 7669).

[1] "F. O.," Austria, No. 68 (October 31st, 1803).

[2] Lavalette, "Mems.," ch. xxiii.; "Georges Cadoudal," by Georges de Cadoudal (Paris, 1887).

"You must not be in a hurry about the arrests: when the author [Méhée] has given in all the information, we will draw up a plan with him, and will see what is to be done. I wish him to write to Drake, and, in order to make him trustful, inform him that, before the great blow can be dealt, he believes he [Méhée] can promise to have seized on the table of the First Consul, in his secret room, notes written in his own hand relating to his great expedition, and every other important document."

Napoleon revelled in the details of his plan for hoisting the engineers with their own petards.[1] But he knew full well that the plot, when fully ripe, would yield far more than the capture of a few Chouans. He must wait until Moreau was implicated. The man selected by the *émigrés* to sound Moreau was Pichegru, and this choice was the sole instance of common sense displayed by them. It was Pichegru who had marked out the future fortune of Moreau in the campaign of 1793, and yet he had seemed to be the victim of that general's gross ingratitude at Fructidor. Who then so fitted as he to approach the victor of Hohenlinden? Through a priest named David and General Lajolais, an interview was arranged; and shortly after Pichegru's arrival in France, these warriors furtively clasped hands in the capital which had so often resounded with their praises (January, 1804). They met three or four times, and cleared away some of the misunderstandings of the past. But he would have nothing to do with Georges, and when Pichegru mooted the overthrow of Bonaparte and the restoration of the Bourbons, he firmly warned him: "Do with Bonaparte what you will, but do not ask me to put a Bourbon in his place."

From this resolve Moreau never receded. But his calculating reserve did not save him. Already several suspects had been imprisoned in Normandy. At Napoleon's suggestion five of them were condemned to death,

[1] See his letter of January 24th, 1804, to Réal, instructing him to tell Méhée what falsehoods are to find a place in Méhée's next bulletin to Drake! "Keep on continually with the affair of my portfolio."

in the hope of extorting a confession; and the last, a man named Querelle, gratified his gaolers by revealing (February 14th) not only the lodging of Georges in Paris, but the intention of other conspirators, among whom was a French prince, to land at Biville. The plot was now coming to a head, and so was the counter-plot. On the next day Moreau was arrested by order of Napoleon, who feigned the utmost grief and surprise at seeing the victor of Hohenlinden mixed up with royalist assassins in the pay of England.[1]

Elated by this success, and hoping to catch the Comte d'Artois himself, Napoleon forthwith despatched to that cliff one of his most crafty and devoted servants, Savary, who commanded the *gendarmerie d'élite*. Tricked out in suitable disguises, and informed by a smuggler as to the royalist signals, Savary eagerly awaited the royal quarry, and when Captain Wright's vessel hove in sight, he used his utmost arts to imitate the signals that invited a landing. But the crew were not to be lured to shore; and after fruitless endeavours he returned to Paris—in time to take part in the murder of the Duc d'Enghien.

Meanwhile the police were on the tracks of Pichegru and Georges. On the last day of February the general was seized in bed in the house of a treacherous friend: but not until the gates of Paris had been closed, and domiciliary visits made, was Georges taken, and then only after a desperate affray (March 9th). The arrest of the two Polignacs and the Marquis de Rivière speedily followed.

Hitherto Napoleon had completely outwitted his foes. He knew well enough that he was in no danger.

"I have run no real risks," he wrote to Melzi, "for the police had its eyes on all these machinations, and I have the consolation of not finding reason to complain of a single man

[1] Miot de Melito, vol. i., ch. xvi.; Pasquier, vol. i., ch. vii. See also Desmarest, "Quinze ans de la haute police": his claim that the police previously knew nothing of the plot is refuted by Napoleon's letters (*e.g.*, that of November 1st, 1803); as also by Guilhermy, "Papiers d'un Emigré," p. 122.

among all those I have placed in this huge administration. Moreau stands alone." [1]

But now, at the moment of victory, when France was swelling with rage against royalist assassins, English gold, and Moreau's treachery, the First Consul was hurried into an enterprise which gained him an imperial crown and flecked the purple with innocent blood.

There was living at Ettenheim, in Baden, not far from the Rhine, a young prince of the House of Condé, the Duc d'Enghien. Since the disbanding of the corps of Condé he had been tranquilly enjoying the society of the Princess Charlotte de Rohan, to whom he had been secretly married. Her charms, the attractions of the chase, the society of a small circle of French *émigrés*, and an occasional secret visit to the theatre at Strassburg, formed the chief diversions to an otherwise monotonous life, until he was fired with the hope of a speedy declaration of war by Austria and Russia against Napoleon. Report accused him of having indiscreetly ventured in disguise far into France; but he indignantly denied it. His other letters also prove that he was not an accomplice of the Cadoudal-Pichegru conspiracy. But Napoleon's spies gave information which seemed to implicate him in that enterprise. Chief among them was Méhée, who, at the close of February, hovered about Ettenheim and heard that the duke was often absent for many days at a time.

Napoleon received this news on March 1st, and ordered the closest investigation to be made. One of his spies reported that the young duke associated with General Dumouriez. In reality the general was in London, and the spy had substituted the name of a harmless old gentleman called Thumery. When Napoleon saw the name of Dumouriez with that of the young duke his rage knew no bounds. "Am I a dog to be beaten to death in the street? Why was I not warned that they were assembling at Ettenheim? Are my mur-

[1] "Lettres inédites de Napoléon," letter of Feb. 20th, 1804.

derers sacred beings? They attack my very person. I'll give them war for war." And he overwhelmed with reproaches both Réal and Talleyrand for neglecting to warn him of these traitors and assassins clustering on the banks of the Rhine. The seizure of Georges Cadoudal and the examination of one of his servants helped to confirm Napoleon's surmise that he was the victim of a plot of which the duke and Dumouriez were the real contrivers, while Georges was their tool. Cadoudal's servant stated that there often came to his master's house a mysterious man, at whose entry not only Georges but also the Polignacs and Rivière always arose. This convinced Napoleon that the Duc d'Enghien was directing the plot, and he determined to have the duke and Dumouriez seized. That they were on German soil was naught to him. Talleyrand promised that he could soon prevail on the Elector to overlook this violation of his territory, and the question was then discussed in an informal council. Talleyrand, Réal, and Fouché advised the severest measures. Lebrun spoke of the outcry which such a violation of neutral territory would arouse, but bent before the determination of the First Consul; and the regicide Cambacérès alone offered a firm opposition to an outrage which must embroil France with Germany and Russia. Despite this protest, Napoleon issued his orders and then repaired to the pleasing solitudes of La Malmaison, where he remained in almost complete seclusion. The execution of the orders was now left to Generals Ordener and Caulaincourt, who arranged the raid into Baden; to Murat, who was now Governor of Paris; and to the devoted and unquestioning Savary and Réal.

The seizure of the duke was craftily effected. Troops and gendarmes were quietly mustered at Strassburg: spies were sent forward to survey the ground; and as the dawn of the 15th of March was lighting up the eastern sky, thirty Frenchmen encircled Enghien's abode. His hot blood prompted him to fight, but on the advice of a friend he quietly surrendered, was haled away to Strass-

LOUIS ANTOINE HENRI DE BOURBON, DUC D'ENGHIEN.

From an engraving after an original drawing by Count de Lely in "The Revolutionary Plutarch," 1805.

burg, and thence to the castle of Vincennes on the south-east of Paris. There everything was ready for his reception on the evening of March 20th. The pall of secrecy was spread over the preparations. The name of Plessis was assigned to the victim, and Harel, the governor of the castle, was left ignorant of his rank.[1]

Above all, he was to be tried by a court-martial of officers, a form of judgment which was summary and without appeal; whereas the ordinary courts of justice must be slow and open to the public gaze. It was true that the Senate had just suspended trial by jury in the case of attempts against the First Consul's life—a device adopted in view of the Moreau prosecution. But the certainty of a conviction was not enough: Napoleon determined to strike terror into his enemies, such as a swift and secret blow always inspires. He had resolved on a trial by court-martial when he still believed Enghien to be an accomplice of Dumouriez; and when, late on Saturday, March 17th, that mistake was explained, his purpose remained unshaken—unshaken too by the high mass of Easter Sunday, March 18th, which he heard in state at the Chapel of the Tuileries. On the return journey to Malmaison Josephine confessed to Madame de Rémusat her fears that Bonaparte's will was unalterably fixed: "I have done what I could, but I fear his mind is made up." She and Joseph approached him once more in the park while Talleyrand was at his side. "I fear that cripple," she said, as they came near, and Joseph drew the Minister aside. All was in vain. "Go away; you are a child; you don't understand public duties." This was Josephine's final repulse.

On March 20th Napoleon drew up the form of questions to be put to the prisoner. He now shifted the ground of accusation. Out of eleven questions only the last three referred to the duke's connection with the Cadoudal plot.[2] For in the meantime he had found in

[1] Ségur, "Mems.," ch. x. Bonaparte to Murat and Harel, March 20th.

[2] Letter to Réal, "Corresp.," No. 7639.

the duke's papers proofs of his having offered his services to the British Government for the present war,[1] his hopes of participation in a future Continental war, but nothing that could implicate him in the Cadoudal plot. The papers were certainly disappointing; and that is doubtless the reason why, after examining them on March 19th, he charged Réal "to take secret cognizance of these papers, along with Desmarest. One must prevent any talk on the more or less of charges contained in these papers." The same fact doubtless led to their abstraction along with the *dossier* of the proceedings of the court-martial.[2]

The task of summoning the officers who were to form the court-martial was imposed on Murat. But when this bluff, hearty soldier received this order, he exclaimed: "What! are they trying to soil my uniform! I will not allow it! Let him appoint them himself if he wants to." But a second and more imperious mandate compelled him to perform this hateful duty. The seven senior officers of the garrison of Paris now summoned were ordered not to separate until judgment was passed.[3] At their head was General Hulin, who had shown such daring in the assault on the Bastille; and thus one of the early heroes of the Revolution had the evening of his days shrouded over with the horrors of a midnight murder. Finally, the First Consul charged Savary, who had just returned to Paris from Biville, furious at being baulked of his prey, to proceed to Vincennes with a band of his gendarmes for the carrying out of the sentence.

The seven officers as yet knew nothing of the nature of their mission, or of martial law. "We had not," wrote

[1] The original is in "F. O." (Austria, No. 68).

[2] Pasquier, "Mémoires," vol. i., p. 187.

[3] The Comte de Mosbourg's notes in Count Murat's "Murat" (Paris, 1897), pp. 437-445, prove that Savary did not draw his instructions for the execution of the duke merely from Murat, but from Bonaparte himself, who must therefore be held solely responsible for the composition and conduct of that court. Masson's attempt ("Nap. et sa Famille," ch. xiv.) to inculpate Murat is very weak.

Hulin long afterwards, "the least idea about trials; and, worst of all, the reporter and clerk had scarcely any more experience."[1] The examination of the prisoner was curt in the extreme. He was asked his name, date and place of birth, whether he had borne arms against France and was in the pay of England. To the last questions he answered decisively in the affirmative, adding that he wished to take part in the new war against France.

His replies were the same as he made in his preliminary examination, which he closed with the written and urgent request for a personal interview with Napoleon. To this request the court proposed to accede; but Savary, who had posted himself behind Hulin's chair, at once declared this step to be *inopportune*. The judges had only one chance of escape from their predicament, namely, to induce the duke to invalidate his evidence: this he firmly refused to do, and when Hulin warned him of the danger of his position, he replied that he knew it, and wished to have an interview with the First Consul.

The court then passed sentence, and, "in accordance with article (blank) of the law (blank) to the following effect (blank) condemned him to suffer death." Ashamed, as it would seem, of this clumsy condemnation, Hulin was writing to Bonaparte to request for the condemned man the personal interview which he craved, when Savary took the pen from his hands, with the words: "Your work is done: the rest is my business."[2] The duke was forthwith led out into the moat of the castle, where a few torches shed their light on the final scene of this sombre tragedy: he asked for a priest, but this was denied him: he then bowed his head in prayer, lifted those noble features towards the soldiers, begged them not to miss their aim, and fell, shot through the heart. Hard by was a grave, which, in accordance with orders received on the previous day, the governor had caused to be made ready; into this the body was thrown pell-mell, and the earth

[1] Hulin in "Catastrophe du duc d'Enghien," p. 118.
[2] Dupin in "Catastrophe du duc d'Enghien," pp. 101, 123.

closed over the remains of the last scion of the warlike House of Condé.

Twelve years later loving hands disinterred the bones and placed them in the chapel of the castle. But even then the world knew not all the enormity of the crime. It was reserved for clumsy apologists like Savary to provoke replies and further investigations. The various excuses which throw the blame on Talleyrand, and on everyone but the chief actor, are sufficiently disposed of by the ex-Emperor's will. In that document Napoleon brushed away the excuses which had previously been offered to the credulity or malice of his courtiers, and took on himself the responsibility for the execution :

"I caused the Duc d'Enghien to be arrested and judged, because it was necessary for the safety, the interest, and the honour of the French people when the Comte d'Artois, by his own confession, was supporting sixty assassins at Paris. In similar circumstances I would act in the same way again." [1]

[1] The only excuse which calls for notice here is that Napoleon at the last moment, when urged by Joseph to be merciful, gave way, and despatched orders late at night to Réal to repair to Vincennes. Réal received some order, the exact purport of which is unknown : it was late at night and he postponed going till the morrow. On his way he met Savary, who came towards Paris bringing the news of the duke's execution. Réal's first words, on hearing this unexpected news, were : "How is that possible? I had so many questions to put to the duke : his examination might disclose so much. Another thing gone wrong ; the First Consul will be furious." These words were afterwards repeated to Pasquier both by Savary and by Réal : and, unless Pasquier lied, the belated order sent to Réal was not a pardon (and Napoleon on his last voyage said to Cockburn it was not), but merely an order to extract such information from the duke as would compromise other Frenchmen. Besides, if Napoleon had despatched an order for the duke's *pardon*, why was not that order produced as a sign of his innocence and Réal's blundering? Why did he shut himself up in his private room on March 20th, so that even Josephine had difficulty in gaining entrance? And if he really desired to pardon the duke, how came it that when, at noon of March 21st, Réal explained that he arrived at Vincennes too late, the only words that escaped Napoleon's lips were "C'est bien"? (See Méneval, vol. i., p. 296.) Why also was his countenance the only one that afterwards showed no remorse or grief? Caulaincourt, when he heard the results of his raid into

The execution of the Duc d'Enghien is one of the most important incidents of this period, so crowded with momentous events. The sensation of horror which it caused can be gauged by the mental agony of Madame de Rémusat and of others who had hitherto looked on Bonaparte as the hero of the age and the saviour of the country. His mother hotly upbraided him, saying it was an atrocious act, the stain of which could never be wiped out, and that he had yielded to the advice of enemies eager to tarnish his fame.[1] Napoleon said nothing, but shut himself up in his cabinet, revolving these terrible words, which doubtless bore fruit in the bitter reproaches later to be heaped upon Talleyrand for his share in the tragedy. Many royalists who had begun to rally to his side now showed their indignation at the deed. Chateaubriand, who was about to proceed as the envoy of France to the Republic of Valais, at once offered his resignation and assumed an attitude of covert defiance. And that was the conduct of all royalists who were not dazzled by the glamour of success or cajoled by Napoleon's favours. Many of his friends ventured to show their horror of this Corsican vendetta; and a *mot* which was plausibly, but it seems wrongly, attributed to Fouché, well sums up the general opinion of that callous society: "It was worse than a crime—it was a blunder."

Scarcely had Paris recovered from this sensation when, on April 6th, Pichegru was found strangled in

Baden, fainted with horror, and when brought to by Bonaparte, overwhelmed him with reproaches. Why also had the grave been dug beforehand? Why, finally, were Savary and Réal not disgraced? No satisfactory answer to these questions has ever been given. The "Catastrophe du duc d'Enghien" and Count Boulay de la Meurthe's "Les dernières Années du duc d'Enghien" and Napoleon's "Correspondance" give all the documents needed for forming a judgment on this case. The evidence is examined by Mr. Fay in "The American Hist. Rev.," July and Oct., 1898. For the rewards to the murderers see Masson, "Nap. et sa Famille," chap. xiii.

[1] Ducasse, "Les Rois Frères de Nap.," p. 9.

prison ; and men silently but almost unanimously hailed it as the work of Napoleon's Mamelukes. This judgment, however natural after the Enghien affair, seems to be incorrect. It is true the corpse bore marks which scarcely tallied with suicide: but Georges Cadoudal, whose cell was hard by, heard no sound of a scuffle ; and it is unlikely that so strong a man as Pichegru would easily have succumbed to assailants. It is therefore more probable that the conqueror of Holland, shattered by his misfortunes and too proud to undergo a public trial, cut short a life which already was doomed. Never have plotters failed more ignominiously and played more completely into the hands of their enemy. A *mot* of the Boulevards wittily sums up the results of their puny efforts: "They came to France to give her a king, and they gave her an Emperor."

CHAPTER XX

THE DAWN OF THE EMPIRE

FOR some time the question of a Napoleonic dynasty had been freely discussed; and the First Consul himself had latterly confessed his intentions to Joseph in words that reveal his super-human confidence and his caution: "I always intended to end the Revolution by the establishment of heredity: but I thought that such a step could not be taken before the lapse of five or six years." Events, however, bore him along on a favouring tide. Hatred of England, fear of Jacobin excesses, indignation at the royalist schemes against his life, and finally even the execution of Enghien, helped on the establishment of the Empire. Though moderate men of all parties condemned the murder, the remnants of the Jacobin party hailed it with joy. Up to this time they had a lingering fear that the First Consul was about to play the part of Monk. The pomp of the Tuileries and the hated Concordat seemed to their crooked minds but the prelude to a recall of the Bourbons, whereupon priestcraft, tithes, and feudalism would be the order of the day. Now at last the tragedy of Vincennes threw a lurid light into the recesses of Napoleon's ambition; and they exclaimed, "He is one of us." It must thenceforth be war to the knife between the Bourbons and Bonaparte; and his rule would therefore be the best guarantee for the perpetual ownership of the lands confiscated during the Revolution.[1]

To a materialized society that great event had come to

[1] Miot de Melito, vol. ii., ch. i.; Pasquier, vol. i., ch. ix.

be little more than a big land investment syndicate, of which Bonaparte was now to be the sole and perpetual director. This is the inner meaning of the references to the Social Contract which figure so oddly among the petitions for hereditary rule. The Jacobins, except a few conscientious stalwarts, were especially alert in the feat of making extremes meet. Fouché, who now wriggled back into favour and office, appealed to the Senate, only seven days after the execution, to establish hereditary power as the only means of ending the plots against Napoleon's life; for, as the opportunist Jacobins argued, if the hereditary system were adopted, conspiracies to murder would be meaningless, when, even if they struck down one man, they must fail to shatter the system that guaranteed the Revolution.

The cue having been thus dextrously given, appeals and petitions for hereditary rule began to pour in from all parts of France. The grand work of the reorganization of France certainly furnished a solid claim on the nation's gratitude. The recent promulgation of the Civil Code and the revival of material prosperity redounded to Napoleon's glory; and with equal truth and wit he could claim the diadem as a fit reward *for having revived many interests while none had been displaced.* Such a remark and such an exploit proclaim the born ruler of men. But the Senate overstepped all bounds of decency when it thus addressed him: "You are founding a new era: but you ought to make it last for ever: splendour is nothing without duration." The Greeks who fawned on Persian satraps did not more unman themselves than these pensioned sycophants, who had lived through the days of 1789 but knew them not. This fulsome adulation would be unworthy of notice did it not convey the most signal proof of the danger which republics incur when men lose sight of the higher aims of life and wallow among its sordid interests.[1]

[1] I cannot agree with M. Lanfrey, vol. ii., ch. xi., that the Empire was not desired by the nation. It seems to me that this writer here

After the severe drilling of the last four years, the Chambers voted nearly unanimously in favour of a Napoleonic dynasty. The Corps Législatif was not in session, and it was not convoked. The Senate, after hearing Fouché's unmistakable hints, named a commission of its members to report on hereditary rule, and then waited on events. These were decided mainly in private meetings of the Council of State, where the proposal met with some opposition from Cambacérès, Merlin, and Thibaudeau. But of what avail are private remonstrances when in open session opponents are dumb and supporters vie in adulation? In the Tribunate, on April 23rd, an obscure member named Curée proposed the adoption of the hereditary principle. One man alone dared openly to combat the proposal, the great Carnot; and the opposition of Curée to Carnot might have recalled to the minds of those abject champions of popular liberty the verse that glitters amidst the literary rubbish of the Roman Empire:

"Victrix causa deis placuit, sed victa Catoni."

The Tribunate named a commission to report; it was favourable to the Bonapartes. The Senate voted in the same sense, three Senators alone, among them Grégoire, Bishop of Blois, voting against it. Sieyès and Lanjuinais were absent; but the well-salaried lord of the manor of Crosne must have read with amused contempt the resolution of this body, which he had designed to be the *guardian of the republican constitution:*

"The French have conquered liberty: they wish to preserve their conquest: they wish for repose after victory. They will owe this glorious repose to the hereditary rule of a single man, who, raised above all, is to defend public liberty, maintain equality, and lower his fasces before the sovereignty of the people that proclaims him."

attributes to the apathetic masses his own unrivalled acuteness of vision and enthusiasm for democracy. Lafayette well sums up the situation in the remark that he was more shocked at the submission of all than at the usurpation of one man ("Mems.," vol. v., p. 239).

In this way did France reduce to practice the dogma of Rousseau with regard to the occasional and temporary need of a dictator.[1]

When the commonalty are so obsequious, any title can be taken by the one necessary man. Napoleon at first affected to doubt whether the title of Stadtholder would not be more seemly than that of Emperor; and in one of the many conferences held on this topic, Miot de Melito advocated the retention of the term Consul for its grand republican simplicity. But it was soon seen that the term Emperor was the only one which satisfied Napoleon's ambition and French love of splendour. Accordingly a *senatus consultum* of May 18th, 1804, formally decreed to him the title of Emperor of the French. As for his former colleagues, Cambacérès and Lebrun, they were stultified with the titles of Arch-chancellor and Arch-treasurer of the Empire: his brother Joseph received the title of Grand Elector, borrowed from the Holy Roman Empire, and oddly applied to an hereditary empire where the chief *had* been appointed: Louis was dubbed Constable: two other grand dignities, those of Arch-chancellor of State and High Admiral, were not as yet filled, but were reserved for Napoleon's relatives by marriage, Eugène Beauharnais and Murat. These six grand dignitaries of the new Empire were to be irresponsible and irremovable, and, along with the Emperor, they formed the Grand Council of the Empire.

On lesser individuals the rays of the imperial diadem cast a fainter glow. Napoleon's uncle, Cardinal Fesch, became Grand Almoner; Berthier, Grand Master of the Hounds; Talleyrand, Grand Chamberlain; Duroc, Grand Marshal of the Palace; and Caulaincourt, Master of the Horse, the acceptance of which title seemed to the world to convict him of full complicity in the schemes for the murder of the Duc d'Enghien. For the rest, the Emperor's mother was to be styled *Madame Mère*; his sisters became Imperial Highnesses, with their several establishments of ladies-in-waiting; and Paris fluttered

[1] See Aulard, "Rév. Française," p. 772, for the opposition.

with excitement at each successive step upwards of expectant nobles, regicides, generals, and stockjobbers towards the central galaxy of the Corsican family, which, ten years before, had subsisted on the alms of the Republic one and indivisible.

It remained to gain over the army. The means used were profuse, in proportion as the task was arduous. The following generals were distinguished as Marshals of the Empire (May 19th): Berthier, Murat, Masséna, Augereau, Lannes, Jourdan, Ney, Soult, Brune, Davoust, Bessières, Moncey, Mortier, and Bernadotte; two marshal's bâtons were held in reserve as a reward for future service, and four aged generals, Lefebvre, Serrurier, Pérignon, and Kellerman (the hero of Valmy), received the title of honorary marshals. In one of his conversations with Roederer, the Emperor frankly avowed his reasons for showering these honours on his military chiefs; it was in order to assure the imperial dignity to himself; for how could they object to this, when they themselves received honours so lofty?[1] The confession affords a curious instance of Napoleon's unbounded trust in the most elementary, not to say the meanest, motives of human conduct. Suitable rewards were bestowed on officers of the second rank. But it was at once remarked that determined and outspoken republicans like Suchet, Gouvion St. Cyr, and Macdonald, whose talents and exploits far outstripped those of many of the marshals, were excluded from their ranks. St. Cyr was at Taranto, and Macdonald, after an enforced diplomatic mission to Copenhagen, was received on his recall with much coolness.[2] Other generals who had given umbrage at the Tuileries were more effectively broken in by a term of diplomatic banishment. Lannes at Lisbon and Brune

[1] Roederer, "Œuvres," vol. iii., p. 513.

[2] Macdonald, "Souvenirs," ch. xii.; Ségur, "Mems.," ch. vii. When Thiébault congratulated Masséna on his new title, the veteran scoffingly replied: "Oh, there are fourteen of us." (Thiébault, "Mems.," ch. vii., Eng. edit.) See too Marmont ("Mems.," vol. ii., p. 227) on his own exclusion and the inclusion of Bessières.

at Constantinople learnt a little diplomacy and some complaisance to the head of the State, and were taken back to Napoleon's favour. Bernadotte, though ever suspected of Jacobinism and feared for the forceful ambition that sprang from the blending of Gascon and Moorish blood in his veins, was now also treated with the consideration due to one who had married Joseph Bonaparte's sister-in-law: he received at Napoleon's hands the house in Paris which had formerly belonged to Moreau: the exile's estate of Grosbois, near Paris, went to reward the ever faithful Berthier. Augereau, half cured of his Jacobinism by the disfavour of the Directory, was now drilling a small French force and Irish volunteers at Brest. But the Grand Army, which comprised the pick of the French forces, was intrusted to the command of men on whom Napoleon could absolutely rely, Davoust, Soult, and Ney; and, in that splendid force, hatred of England and pride in Napoleon's prowess now overwhelmed all political considerations.

These arrangements attest the marvellous foresight and care which Napoleon brought to bear on all affairs: even if the discontented generals and troops had protested against the adoption of the Empire and the prosecution of Moreau, they must have been easily overpowered. In some places, as at Metz, the troops and populace fretted against the Empire and its pretentious pomp; but the action of the commanders soon restored order. And thus it came to pass that even the soldiery that still cherished the Republic raised not a musket while the Empire was founded, and Moreau was accused of high treason.

The record of the French revolutionary generals is in the main a gloomy one. If in 1795 it had been prophesied that all those generals who bore the tricolour to victory would vanish or bow their heads before a Corsican, the prophet would speedily have closed his croakings for ever. Yet the reality was even worse. Marceau and Hoche died in the Rhineland: Kléber and Desaix fell on the same day, by assassination and in battle:

Richepanse, Leclerc, and many other brave officers rotted away in San Domingo: Pichegru died a violent death in prison: Carnot was retiring into voluntary exile: Masséna and Macdonald were vegetating in inglorious ease: others were fast descending to the rank of flunkeys; and Moreau was on his trial for high treason.

Even the populace, dazzled with glitter and drunk with sensations, suffered some qualms at seeing the victor of Hohenlinden placed in the dock; and the grief of the scanty survivors of the Army of the Rhine portended trouble if the forms of justice were too much strained. Trial by jury had been recently dispensed with in cases that concerned the life of Napoleon. Consequently the prisoner, along with Georges and his confederates, could be safely arraigned before judges in open court; and in that respect the trial contrasted with the midnight court-martial of Vincennes. Yet in no State trial have judges been subjected to more official pressure for the purpose of assuring a conviction.[1] The cross examination of numerous witnesses proved that Moreau had persistently refused his help to the plot; and the utmost that could be urged against him was that he desired Napoleon's overthrow, had three interviews with Pichegru, and did not reveal the plot to the authorities. That is to say, he was guilty of passively conniving at the success of a plot which a "good citizen" ought to have denounced.

For these reasons the judges sentenced him to two years' imprisonment. This judgment excessively annoyed Napoleon, who desired to use his imperial prerogative of pardon on Moreau's life, not on a mere term of imprisonment; and with a show of clemency that veiled a hidden irritation, he now released him provided that he retired to the United States.[2] To that land of free men the

[1] Chaptal, "Souvenirs," p. 262. For Moreau's popularity see Madelin's "Fouché," vol. i., p. 422.

[2] At the next public audience Napoleon upbraided one of the judges, Lecourbe, who had maintained that Moreau was innocent, and thereafter deprived him of his judgeship. He also disgraced his brother, General Lecourbe, and forbade his coming within

victor of Hohenlinden retired with a dignity which almost threw a veil over his past incapacity and folly; and, for the present at least, men could say that the end of his political career was nobler than Pompey's, while Napoleon's conduct towards his rival lacked the clemency which graced the triumph of Cæsar.

As for the actual conspirators, twenty of them were sentenced to death on June 10th, among them being the elder of the two Polignacs, the Marquis de Rivière, and Georges Cadoudal. Urgent efforts were made on behalf of the nobles by Josephine and "Madame Mère"; and Napoleon grudgingly commuted their sentence to imprisonment. But the plebeian, Georges Cadoudal, suffered death for the cause that had enlisted all the fierce energies of his youth and manhood. With him perished the bravest of Bretons and the last man of action of the royalists. Thenceforth Napoleon was not troubled by Bourbon plotters; and doubtless the skill with which his agents had nursed this silly plot and sought to entangle all waverers did far more than the strokes of the guillotine to procure his future immunity. Men trembled before a union of immeasurable power with unfathomable craft such as recalled the days of the Emperor Tiberius.

Indeed, Napoleon might now almost say that his chief foes were the members of his own household. The question of hereditary succession had already reawakened and intensified all the fierce passions of the Emperor's relatives. Josephine saw in it the fatal eclipse of a divorce sweeping towards the dazzling field of her new life, and Napoleon is known to have thrice almost decided on this step. She no longer had any hopes of bearing a child; and she is reported by the compiler of the Fouché "Memoirs" to have clutched at that absurd device, a supposititious child, which Fouché had taken care to ridicule in advance. Whatever be the truth of this rumour, she certainly used all her powers over Napoleon and over

forty leagues of Paris. ("Lettres inédites de Napoléon," August 22nd and 29th, 1805.)

GENERAL MOREAU.

After a painting by Gérard from "The Revolutionary Plutarch," 1805.

her daughter Hortense, the spouse of Louis Bonaparte, to have their son recognized as first in the line of direct succession. But this proposal, which shelved both Joseph and Louis, was not only hotly resented by the eldest brother, who claimed to be successor designate, it also aroused the flames of jealousy in Louis himself. It was notorious that he suspected Napoleon of an incestuous passion for Hortense, of which his fondness for the little Charles Napoleon was maliciously urged as proof; and the proposal, when made with trembling eagerness by Josephine, was hurled back by Louis with brutal violence. To the clamour of Louis and Joseph the Emperor and Josephine seemed reluctantly to yield.

New arrangements were accordingly proposed. Lucien and Jerome having, for the present at least, put themselves out of court by their unsatisfactory marriages, Napoleon appeared to accept a reconciliation with Joseph and Louis, and to place them in the order of succession, as the Senate recommended. But he still reserved the right of adopting the son of Louis and of thus favouring his chances of priority. Indeed, it must be admitted that the Emperor at this difficult crisis showed conjugal tact and affection, for which he has received scant justice at the hands of Josephine's champions. "How could I divorce this good wife," he said to Roederer, "because I am becoming great?" But fate seemed to decree the divorce, which, despite the reasonings of his brothers, he resolutely thrust aside; for the little boy on whose life the Empress built so many fond hopes was to be cut off by an early death in the year 1807.

Then there were frequent disputes between Napoleon and Joseph. Both of them had the Corsican's instinct in favour of primogeniture; and hitherto Napoleon had in many ways deferred to his elder brother. Now, however, he showed clearly that he would brook not the slightest interference in affairs of State. And truly, if we except Joseph's diplomatic services, he showed no commanding gifts such as could raise him aloft along

with the bewildering rush of Napoleon's fortunes. The one was an irrepressible genius, the other was a man of culture and talent, whose chief bent was towards literature, amours, and the art of *dolce far niente*, except when his pride was touched: then he was capable of bursts of passion which seemed to impose even on his masterful second brother. Lucien, Louis, and even the youthful Jerome, had the same intractable pride which rose defiant even against Napoleon. He was determined that his brothers should now take a subordinate rank, while they regarded the dynasty as largely due to their exertions at or after Brumaire, and claimed a proportionate reward. Napoleon, however, saw that a dynasty could not thus be founded. As he frankly said to Roederer, a dynasty could only take firm root in France among heirs brought up in a palace: "I have never looked on my brothers as the natural heirs to power: I only consider them as men fit to ward off the evils of a minority."

Joseph deeply resented this conduct. He was a Prince of the Empire, and a Grand Elector; but he speedily found out that this meant nothing more than occasionally presiding at the Senate, and accordingly indulged in little acts of opposition that enraged the autocrat. In his desire to get his brother away from Paris, the Emperor had already recommended him to take up the profession of arms; for he could not include him in the succession, and place famous marshals under him if he knew nothing of an army. Joseph perforce accepted the command of a regiment, and at thirty-six years of age began to learn drill near Boulogne.[1] This piece of burlesque was one day to prove infinitely regrettable. After the disaster of Vittoria, Napoleon doubtless wished that Joseph had for ever had free play in the tribune of the Senate rather than have dabbled in military affairs. But in the spring and summer of 1804 the Emperor noted his every word; so that, when he ventured to suggest that Josephine should not be crowned at the coming

[1] Miot de Melito, vol ii., ch. i.

coronation, Napoleon's wrath blazed forth. Why should Joseph speak of *his* rights and *his* interests? Who had won power? Who deserved to enjoy power? Power was his (Napoleon's) mistress, and he dared Joseph to touch her. The Senate or Council of State might oppose him for ten years, without his becoming a tyrant: "To make me a tyrant one thing alone is necessary—a movement of my family."[1]

The family, however, did not move. As happened with all the brothers except Lucien, Joseph gave way at the critical moment. After threatening at the Council of State to resign his Grand Electorate and retire to Germany if his wife were compelled to bear Josephine's train at the coronation, he was informed by the Emperor that either he must conduct himself dutifully as the first subject of the realm, or retire into private life, or oppose —and be crushed. The argument was unanswerable, and Joseph yielded. To save his own and his wife's feelings, the wording of the official programme was altered: she was *to support Josephine's mantle*, not *to bear her train*.

In things great and small Napoleon carried his point. Although Roederer pleaded long and earnestly that Joseph and Louis should come next to the Emperor in the succession, and inserted a clause in the report which he was intrusted to draw up, yet by some skilful artifice this clause was withdrawn from the constitutional act on which the nation was invited to express its opinion: and France assented to a *plébiscite* for the establishment of the Empire in Napoleon's family, which passed over Joseph and Louis, as well as Lucien and Jerome, and vested the succession in the natural or adopted son of Napoleon, and in the heirs male of Joseph or Louis. Consequently these princes had no place in the succession, except by virtue of the *senatus consultum* of May 18th, which gave them a legal right, it is true, but without the added sanction of the popular vote. More than three and a half million votes were

[1] Napoleon to Roederer, "Œuvres," vol. iii., p. 514.

cast for the new arrangement, a number which exceeded those given for the Consulate and the Consulate for Life. As usual, France accepted accomplished facts.

Matters legal and ceremonial were now approaching completion for the coronation. Negotiations had been proceeding between the Tuileries and the Vatican, Napoleon begging and indeed requiring the presence of the Pope on that occasion. Pius VII. was troubled at the thought of crowning the murderer of the Duc d'Enghien; but he was scarcely his own master, and the dextrous hints of Napoleon that religion would benefit if he were present at Notre Dame seem to have overcome his first scruples, besides quickening the hope of recovering the north of his States. He was to be disappointed in more ways than one. Religion was to benefit only from the enhanced prestige given to her rites in the coming ceremony, not in the practical way that the Pope desired. And yet it was of the first importance for Napoleon to receive the holy oil and the papal blessing, for only so could he hope to wean the affections of royalists from their uncrowned and exiled king. Doubtless this was one of the chief reasons for the restoration of religion by the Concordat, as was shrewdly seen at the time by Lafayette, who laughingly exclaimed: "Confess, general, that your chief wish is for the little phial."[1] The sally drew from the First Consul an obscene disclaimer worthy of a drunken ostler. Nevertheless, the little phial was now on its way.

In order to divest the meeting of Pope and Emperor of any awkward ceremony, Napoleon arranged that it should take place on the road between Fontainebleau and Nemours, as a chance incident in the middle of a day's hunting. The benevolent old pontiff was reclining in his carriage, weary with the long journey through the cold of an early winter, when he was startled to see the retinue of his host. The contrast in every way was striking. The figure of the Emperor had now attained the fullness which betokens abounding health and strength: his face

[1] Lafayette, "Mems.," vol. v., p. 182.

was slightly flushed with the hunt and the consciousness that he was master of the situation, and his form on horseback gained a dignity from which the shortness of his legs somewhat detracted when on foot. As he rode up attired in full hunting costume, he might have seemed the embodiment of triumphant strength. The Pope, on the other hand, clad in white garments and with white silk shoes, gave an impression of peaceful benevolence, had not his intellectual features borne signs of the protracted anxieties of his pontificate. The Emperor threw himself from his horse and advanced to meet his guest, who on his side alighted, rather unwillingly, in the mud to give and receive the embrace of welcome. Meanwhile Napoleon's carriage had been driven up: footmen were holding open both doors, and an officer of the Court politely handed Pius VII. to the left door, while the Emperor, entering by the right, took the seat of honour, and thus settled once for all the vexed question of social precedence.[1]

During the Pope's sojourn at Fontainebleau, Josephine breathed to him her anxiety as to her marriage; it having been only a civil contract, she feared its dissolution, and saw in the Pope's intervention a chance of a firmer union with her consort. The pontiff comforted her and required from Napoleon the due solemnization of his marriage; it was therefore secretly performed by Napoleon's uncle, Cardinal Fesch, two days before the coronation.[2]

It was not enough, however, that the successor of St. Peter should grace the coronation with his presence:

[1] "Mémoires de Savary, Duc de Rovigo." So Bourrienne, who was informed by Rapp, who was present (vol. ii., ch. xxxiii.). The "Moniteur" (4th Frimaire, Year XIII.) asserted that the Pope took the right-hand seat; but I distrust its version.

[2] Mme. de Rémusat, vol. i., ch. x. As the *curé* of the parish was not present, even as witness, this new contract was held by the Bonapartes to lack full validity. It is certain, however, that Fesch always maintained that the marriage could only be annulled by an act of arbitrary authority. For Napoleon's refusal to receive the communion on the morning of the coronation, lest he, being what he was, should be guilty of sacrilege and hypocrisy, see Ségur.

the Emperor sought to touch the imagination of men by figuring as the successor of Charlemagne. We here approach one of the most interesting experiments of the modern world, which, if successful, would profoundly have altered the face of Europe and the character of its States. Even in its failure it attests Napoleon's vivid imagination and boundless mental resources. He aspired to be more than Emperor of the French: he wished to make his Empire a cosmopolitan realm, whose confines might rival those of the Holy Roman Empire of one thousand years before, and embrace scores of peoples in a grand, well-ordered European polity.

Already his dominions included a million of Germans in the Rhineland, Italians of Piedmont, Genoa, and Nice, besides Savoyards, Genevese, and Belgians. How potent would be his influence on the weltering chaos of German and Italian States, if these much-divided peoples learnt to look on him as the successor to the glories of Charlemagne! And this honour he was now to claim. However delusive was the parallel between the old semi-tribal polity and modern States where the peoples were awakening to a sense of their nationality, Napoleon was now in a position to clear the way for his great experiment. He had two charms wherewith to work, material prosperity and his gift of touching the popular imagination. The former of these was already silently working in his favour: the latter was first essayed at the coronation.

Already, after a sojourn at Boulogne, he had visited Aix-la-Chapelle, the city where Charlemagne's relics are entombed, and where Victor Hugo in some of his sublimest verse has pictured Charles V. kneeling in prayer to catch the spirit of the mediæval hero. Thither went Napoleon, but in no suppliant mood; for when Josephine was offered the arm-bones of the great dead, she also proudly replied that she would not deprive the city of that precious relic, especially as she had the support of an arm as great as that of Charlemagne.[1] The insignia and the sword of that monarch were now brought to

[1] Ségur, ch. xi.

Paris, and shed on the ceremony of coronation that historic gleam which was needed to redeem it from tawdry commonplace.

All that money and art could do to invest the affair with pomp and circumstance had already been done. The advice of the new Master of the Ceremonies, M. de Ségur, and the hints of the other nobles who had rallied to the new Empire, had been carefully collated by the untiring brain that now watched over France. The sum of 1,123,000 francs had been expended on the coronation robes of Emperor and Empress, and far more on crowns and tiaras. The result was seen in costumes of matchless splendour; the Emperor wore a French coat of red velvet embroidered in gold, a short cloak adorned with bees and the collar of the Legion of Honour in diamonds; and at the archbishop's palace he assumed the long purple robe of velvet profusely ornamented with ermine, while his brow was encircled by a wreath of laurel, meed of mighty conquerors. In the pommel of his sword flashed the famous Pitt diamond, which, after swelling the family fortune of the British statesman, fell to the Regent of France, and now graced the coronation of her Dictator. The Empress, radiant with joy at her now indissoluble union, bore her splendours with an easy grace that charmed all beholders and gave her an almost girlish air. She wore a robe of white satin, trimmed with silver and gold and besprinkled with golden bees: her waist and shoulders glittered with diamonds, while on her brows rested a diadem of the finest diamonds and pearls valued at more than a million francs.[1] The curious might remember that for a necklace of less than twice that value the fair fame of Marie Antoinette had been clouded over and the House of Bourbon shaken to its base.

The stately procession began with an odd incident: Napoleon and Josephine, misled apparently by the all-

[1] F. Masson's "Joséphine, Impératrice et Reine," p. 229. For the Pitt diamond, see Yule's pamphlet and Sir M. Grant Duff's "Diary," June 30, 1888.

pervading splendour of the new state carriage, seated themselves on the wrong side, that is, in the seats destined for Joseph and Louis: the mistake was at once made good, with some merriment; but the superstitious saw in it an omen of evil.[1] And now, amidst much enthusiasm and far greater curiosity, the procession wound along through the Rue Nicaise and the Rue St. Honoré—streets where Bonaparte had won his spurs on the day of Vendémiaire—over the Pont-Neuf, and so to the venerable cathedral, where the Pope, chilled by long waiting, was ready to grace the ceremony. First he anointed Emperor and Empress with the holy oil; then, at the suitable place in the Mass he blessed their crowns, rings, and mantles, uttering the traditional prayers for the possession of the virtues and powers which each might seem to typify. But when he was about to crown the Emperor, he was gently waved aside, and Napoleon with his own hands crowned himself. A thrill ran through the august assembly, either of pity for the feelings of the aged pontiff or of admiration at the "noble and legitimate pride" of the great captain who claimed as wholly his own the crown which his own right arm had won. Then the *cortège* slowly returned to the middle of the nave, where a lofty throne had been reared.

Another omen now startled those who laid store by trifles. It was noticed that the sovereigns in ascending the steps nearly fell backwards under the weight of their robes and trains, though in the case of Josephine the anxious moment may have been due to the carelessness, whether accidental or studied, of her "mantle-bearers." But to those who looked beneath the surface of things was not this an all-absorbing portent, that all this religious pomp should be removed by scarcely eleven years from the time when this same nave echoed to the shouts and gleamed with the torches of the worshippers of the newly enthroned Goddess of Reason?

Revolutionary feelings were not wholly dead, but they now vented themselves merely in gibes. On the night

[1] De Bausset, "Court de Napoléon," ch. ii.

NAPOLEON CROWNING JOSEPHINE.

From the painting by David at Versailles.

before the coronation the walls of Paris were adorned with posters announcing: *The last Representation of the French Revolution—for the Benefit of a poor Corsican Family.* And after the event there were inquiries why the new throne had no *glands d'or:* the answer suggested because it was *sanglant.*[1] Beyond these quips and jests the Jacobins and royalists did not go. When the phrase *your subjects* was publicly assigned to the Corps Législatif by its courtier-like president, Fontanes, there was a flutter of wrath among those who had hoped that the new Empire was to be republican. But it quickly passed away; and no Frenchman, except perhaps Carnot, made so manly a protest as the man of genius at Vienna, who had composed the "Sinfonia Eroïca," and with grand republican simplicity inscribed it, "Beethoven à Bonaparte." When the master heard that his former hero had taken the imperial crown, he tore off the dedication with a volley of curses on the renegade and tyrant; and in later years he dedicated the immortal work to the *memory* of a great man.

[1] "Foreign Office Records," Intelligences, No. 426.

CHAPTER XXI

THE BOULOGNE FLOTILLA

THE establishment of the Empire, as has been seen, provoked few signs of opposition from the French armies, once renowned for their Jacobinism ; and by one or two instances of well-timed clemency, the Emperor gained over even staunch republicans. Notably was this the case with a brave and stalwart colonel, who, enraged at the first volley of cheers for the Empire, boldly ordered "Silence in the ranks." At once Napoleon made him general and appointed him one of his aides-de-camp ; and this brave officer, Mouton by name, was later to gain glory and the title of Comte de Lobau in the Wagram campaign. These were the results of a timely act of generosity, such as touches the hearts of any soldiery and leads them to shed their blood like water. And so when Napoleon, after the coronation, distributed to the garrison of Paris their standards, topped now by the imperial eagles, the great Champ de Mars was a scene of wild enthusiasm. The thunderous shouts that acclaimed the prowess of the new Frankish leader were as warlike as those which ever greeted the hoisting of a Carolingian King on the shields of his lieges. Distant nations heard the threatening din and hastened to muster their forces for the fray.

As yet only England was at war with the Emperor. Against her Napoleon now prepared to embattle the might of his vast Empire. The preparations on the northern coast were now wellnigh complete, and there was only one question to be solved—how to "leap the ditch." It seems strange to us now that no attempt

was made to utilize the great motive force of the nineteenth century—steam power. And the French memoir-writers, Marmont, Bourrienne, Pasquier, and Bausset, have expressed their surprise that so able a chief as Napoleon should have neglected this potent ally.

Their criticisms seem to be prompted by later reflections rather than based on an accurate statement of facts. In truth, the nineteenth-century Hercules was still in his cradle. Henry Bell had in 1800 experimented with a steamer on the Clyde; but it aroused the same trembling curiosity as Trevithick's first locomotive, or as Fulton's first paddle-boat built on the Seine in 1803. In fact, this boat of the great American inventor was so weak that, when at anchor, it broke in half during a gale, thus ridding itself of the weight of its cumbrous engine. With his usual energy, Fulton built a larger and stronger craft, which not only carried the machinery, but, in August, 1803, astonished the members of the French Institute by moving, though with much circumspection.

Fulton, however, was disappointed, and if we may judge from the scanty records of his life, he never offered this invention to Napoleon.[1] He felt the need of better machinery, and as this could only be procured in England, he gave the order to a Birmingham firm, which engined his first successful boat, the "Clermont," launched on the Hudson in 1807. But for the war, perhaps, Fulton would have continued to live in Paris and made his third attempt there. He certainly never offered his imperfect steamship to the First Consul. Probably the fact that his first boat foundered when at anchor in the Seine would have procured him a rough reception, if he had offered to equip the whole of the Boulogne flotilla with an invention which had sunk its first receptacle and propelled the second boat at a snail's pace.

Besides, he had already met with one repulse from Napoleon. He had offered, first to the Directory and later to the First Consul, a boat which he claimed would "deliver France and the world from British oppression."

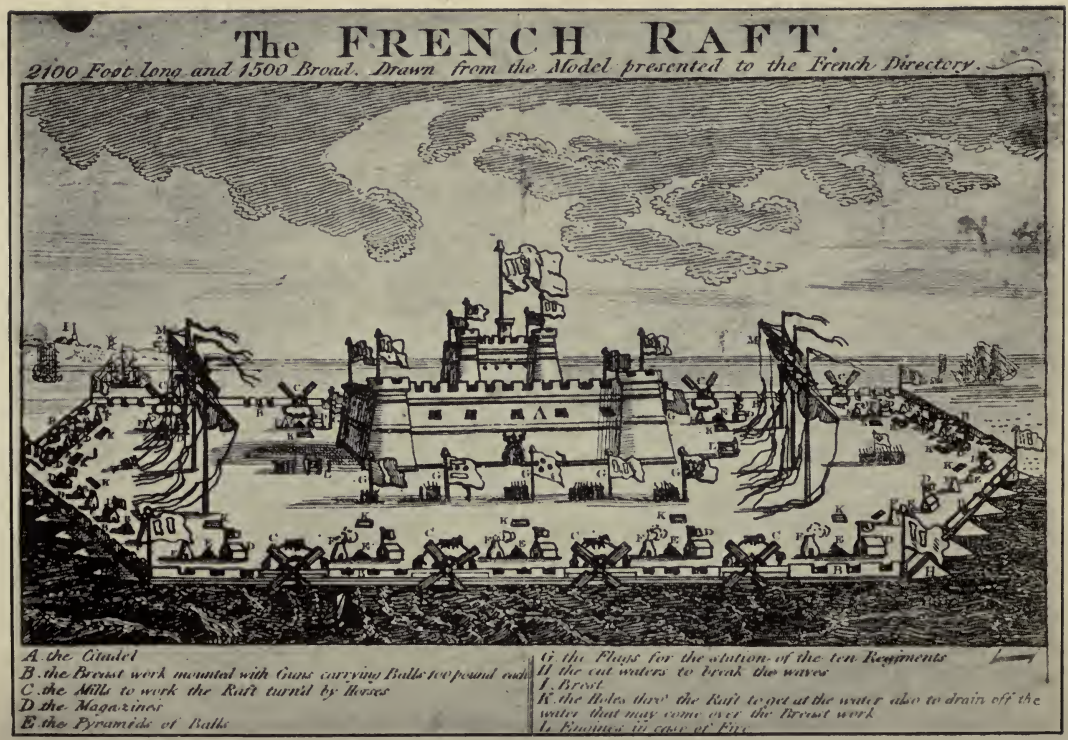
[1] "Life of Fulton," by Colden (1817); also one by Reigart (1856).

This was a sailing vessel, which could sink under water and then discharge under a hostile ship a "carcass" of gunpowder or *torpedo*—another invention of his fertile brain. The Directory at once repulsed him. Bonaparte instructed Monge, Laplace, and Volney to report on this submarine or "plunging" boat, which had a partial success. It succeeded in blowing up a small vessel in the harbour at Brest in July, 1801; but the Commission seems to have reported unfavourably on its utility for offensive purposes. In truth, as Fulton had not then applied motive power to this invention, the name "plunging boat" conveyed an exaggerated notion of its functions, which were more suited to a life of ascetic contemplation than of destructive activity.

It appears that the memoir-writers named above have confused the two distinct inventions of Fulton just referred to. In the latter half of 1803 he repaired to England, and later on to the United States, and after the year 1803 he seems to have had neither the will nor the opportunity to serve Napoleon. In England he offered his torpedo patent to the English Admiralty, expressing his hatred of the French Emperor as a "wild beast who ought to be hunted down." Little was done with the torpedo in England, except to blow up a vessel off Walmer as a proof of what it could do. It is curious also that when Bell offered his paddle-boat to the Admiralty it was refused, though Nelson is said to have spoken in its favour. The official mind is everywhere hostile to new inventions; and Marmont suggestively remarks that Bonaparte's training as an artillerist, and his experience of the inconvenience and expense resulting from the adoption of changes in that arm, had no slight influence in setting him against all innovations.

But, to resume our description of the Boulogne flotilla, it may be of interest to give some hitherto unpublished details about the flat-bottomed boats, and then to pass in brief review Napoleon's plans for assuring a temporary command of the Channel.

It is clear that he at first relied almost solely on the



From a contemporary woodcut.

flotilla. After one of his visits to Boulogne, he wrote on November 23rd, 1803, to Admiral Gantheaume that he would soon have on the northern coast 1,300 flat-bottomed boats able to carry 100,000 men, while the Dutch flotilla would transport 60,000. "Do you think it will take us to the English coast? Eight hours of darkness which favour us would decide the fate of the universe." There is no mention of any convoying fleet: the First Consul evidently believed that the flotilla could beat off any attack at sea. This letter offers a signal proof of his inability, at least at that time, to understand the risks of naval warfare. But though his precise and logical mind seems then to have been incapable of fully realizing the conditions of war on the fickle, troublous, and tide-swept Channel, his admirals urgently warned him against trusting to shallow, flat-bottomed boats to beat the enemy out at sea; for though these *praams* in their coasting trips repelled the attacks of British cruisers, which dared not come into shallow waters, it did not follow that they would have the same success in mid-Channel, far away from coast defences and amidst choppy waves that must render the guns of keelless boats wellnigh useless.[1]

The present writer, after going through the reports of our admiral stationed in the Downs, is convinced that our seamen felt a supreme contempt for the flat-bottomed boats when at sea. After the capture of one of them, by an English gun-brig, Admiral Montagu reported, November 23rd, 1803:

"It is impossible to suppose for an instant that anything effective can be produced by such miserable tools, equally ill-calculated for the grand essentials in a maritime formation, battle and speed: that floored as this wretched vessel is, she cannot hug the wind, but must drift bodily to leeward, which

[1] Jurien de la Gravière, "Guerres Maritimes," vol. ii., p. 75; Chevalier, "Hist. de la Marine Française," p. 105; Capt. Desbrière's "Projets de Débarquement aux Iles Britanniques," vol. i. The accompanying engraving shows how fantastic were some of the earlier French schemes of invasion.

indeed was the cause of her capture; for, having got a little to leeward of Boulogne Bay, it was impossible to get back and she was necessitated to steer large for Calais. On the score of battle, she has one long 18-pounder, without breeching or tackle, traversing on a slide, which can only be fired stem on. The 8-pounder is mounted aft, but is a fixture: so that literally, if one of our small boats was to lay alongside there would be nothing but musketry to resist, and those [*sic*] placed in the hands of poor wretches weakened by the effect of sea-sickness, exemplified when this gun-boat was captured—the soldiers having retreated to the hold, incapable of any energy or manly exertion. . . . In short, Sir, these vessels in my mind are completely contemptible and ridiculous, and I therefore conclude that the numbers collected at Boulogne are to keep our attention on the *qui vive*, and to gloss over the real attack meditated from other points."

The vessel which provoked the contempt of our admiral was not one of the smallest class: she was 58½ ft. long, 14½ ft. wide, drew 3 ft. forward and 4 ft. aft: her sides rose 3 ft. above the water, and her capacity was 35 tons. The secret intelligence of the Admiralty for the years 1804 and 1805 also shows that Dutch sailors were equally convinced of the unseaworthiness of these craft: Admiral Verhuell plainly told the French Emperor that, however flatterers might try to persuade him of the feasibility of the expedition, "nothing but disgrace could be expected." The same volume (No. 426) contains a report of the capture of two of the larger class of French *chaloupes* off Cape La Hogue. Among the prisoners was a young French royalist named La Bourdonnais: when forced by the conscription to enter Napoleon's service, he chose to serve with the *chaloupes* "because of his conviction that all these flotillas were nothing but bugbears and would never attempt the invasion so much talked of and in which so few persons really believe." The same was the opinion of the veteran General Dumouriez, who, now an exile in England, drew up for our Government a long report on the proposed invasion and the means of thwarting it. The

reports of our spies also prove that all experienced seamen on the Continent declared Napoleon's project to be either a ruse or a foolhardy venture.

The compiler of the Ney "Memoirs," who was certainly well acquainted with the opinions of that Marshal, then commanding the troops at Boulogne, also believed that the flotilla was only able to serve as a gigantic ferry.[1] The French admirals were still better aware of the terrible risks to their crowded craft in a fight out at sea. They also pointed out that the difference in the size, draught, and speed of the boats must cause the dispersion of the flotilla, when its parts might fall a prey to the more seaworthy vessels of the enemy. Indeed, the only chance of crossing without much loss seemed to be offered by a protracted calm, when the British cruisers would be helpless against a combined attack of a cloud of rowboats. The risks would be greater during a fog, when the crowd of boats must be liable to collision, stranding on shoals, and losing their way. Even the departure of this quaint armada presented grave difficulties: it was found that the whole force could not clear the harbour in a single tide; and a part of the flotilla must therefore remain exposed to the British fire before the whole mass could get under way. For all these reasons Bruix, the commander of the flotilla, and Decrès, Minister of Marine, dissuaded Napoleon from attempting the descent without the support of a powerful covering fleet.

Napoleon's correspondence shows that, by the close of the year 1803, he had abandoned that first fatuous scheme which gained him from the wits of Paris the soubriquet of "Don Quixote de la Manche."[2] On the 7th of December he wrote to Gantheaume, maritime prefect at Toulon, urging him to press on the completion of his nine ships of the line and five frigates, and sketching plans of a naval combination that promised to insure

[1] "Mémoires du Maréchal Ney," bk. vii., ch. i.; so too Marmont, vol. ii., p. 213; Mahan, "Sea Power," ch. xv.

[2] Roederer, "Œuvres," vol. iii., p. 494.

the temporary command of the Channel. Of these only two need be cited here:

1. "The Toulon squadron will set out on 20th *nivôse* (January 10th, 1804), will arrive before Cadiz (or Lisbon), will find there the Rochefort squadron, will sail on without making land, between Brest and the Sorlingues, will touch at Cape La Hogue, and will pass in forty-eight hours before Boulogne: thence it will continue to the mouth of the Scheldt (there procuring masts, cordage, and all needful things)—or perhaps to Cherbourg.

2. "The Rochefort squadron will set out on 20th *nivôse*, will reach Toulon the 20th *pluviôse:* the united squadrons will set sail in *ventôse*, and arrive in *germinal* before Boulogne—that is rather late. In any case the Egyptian Expedition will cover the departure of the Toulon squadron: everything will be managed *so that Nelson will first sail for Alexandria.*"

These schemes reveal the strong and also the weak qualities of Napoleon. He perceived the strength of the central position which France enjoyed on her four coasts; and he now contrived all his dispositions, both naval and political, so as to tempt Nelson away eastwards from Toulon during the concentration of the French fleet in the Channel; and for this purpose he informed the military officers at Toulon that their destination was Taranto and the Morea. It was to these points that he wished to decoy Nelson; for this end had he sent his troops to Taranto, and kept up French intrigues in Corfu, the Morea, and Egypt; it was for this purpose that he charged that wily spy Méhée to inform Drake that the Toulon fleet was to take 40,000 French troops to the Morea, and that the Brest fleet, with 200 highly trained Irish officers, was intended solely for Ireland. But, while displaying consummate guile, he failed to allow for the uncertainties of operations conducted by sea. Ignoring the patent fact that the Toulon fleet was blockaded by Nelson, and that of Rochefort by Collingwood, he fixed the dates of their departure and junction as though he were ordering the movements of a *corps d'armée* in Provence; and this craving for certainty was

to mar his naval plans and dog his footsteps with the shadow of disaster.[1]

The plan of using the Toulon fleet to cover an invasion of England was not entirely new. As far back as the days of De Tourville, a somewhat similar plan had been devised: the French Channel and Atlantic fleets under that admiral were closely to engage Russell off the Isle of Wight, while the Toulon squadron, sailing northwards, was to collect the French transports on the coasts of Normandy for the invasion of England. Had Napoleon carefully studied French naval history, he would have seen that the disaster of La Hogue was largely caused by the severe weather which prevented the rendezvous, and brought about a hasty and ill-advised alteration in the original scheme. But of all subjects on which he spoke as an authority, there was perhaps not one that he had so inadequately studied as naval strategy: yet there was none wherein the lessons of experience needed so carefully to be laid to heart.

Fortune seemed to frown on Napoleon's naval schemes: yet she was perhaps not unkind in thwarting them in their first stages. Events occurred which early suggested a deviation from the combinations noticed above. In the last days of 1803, hearing that the English were about to attack Martinique, he at once wrote to Gantheaume, urging him to despatch the Toulon squadron under Admiral Latouche-Tréville for the rescue of this important island. The commander of the troops, Cervoni, was to be told that the expedition aimed at the Morea, so that spies might report this news to Nelson, and it is clear from our admiral's despatches that the ruse half succeeded. Distracted, however, by the thought that the French might, after all, aim at Ireland, Nelson clung

[1] Colonel Campbell, our Commissioner at Elba, noted in his diary (December 5th, 1814): "As I have perceived in many conversations, Napoleon has no idea of the difficulties occasioned by winds and tides, but judges of changes of position in the case of ships as he would with regard to troops on land."

to the vicinity of Toulon, and his untiring zeal kept in harbour the most daring admiral in the French navy, who, despite his advanced age, excited an enthusiasm that none other could arouse.

To him, in spite of his present ill-fortune, Napoleon intrusted the execution of a scheme bearing date July 2nd, 1804. Latouche was ordered speedily to put to sea with his ten ships of the line and four frigates, to rally a French warship then at Cadiz, release the five ships of the line and four frigates blockaded at Rochefort by Collingwood, and then sweep the Channel and convoy the flotilla across the straits. This has been pronounced by Jurien de la Gravière the best of all Napoleon's plans: it exposed ships that had long been in harbour only to a short ocean voyage, and it was free from the complexity of the later and more grandiose schemes.

But fate interposed and carried off the intrepid commander by that worst of all deaths for a brave seaman, death by disease in harbour, where he was shut up by his country's foes (August 20th).

Villeneuve was thereupon appointed to succeed him, while Missiessy held command at Rochefort. The choice of Villeneuve has always been considered strange; and the riddle is not solved by the declaration of Napoleon that he considered that Villeneuve at the Nile showed his *good fortune* in escaping with the only French ships which survived that disaster. A strange reason this: to appoint an admiral commander of an expedition that was to change the face of the world because his good fortune consisted in escaping from Nelson![1]

Napoleon now began to widen his plans. According to the scheme of September 29th, three expeditions were now to set out; the first was to assure the safety of the French West Indies; the second was to recover the Dutch colonies in those seas and reinforce the French troops still holding out in part of St. Domingo; while

[1] Jurien de la Gravière, vol. ii., p. 88, who says: "His mild and melancholy disposition, his sad and modest behaviour, ill suited the Emperor's ambitious plans."

the third had as its objective West Africa and St. Helena. The Emperor evidently hoped to daze us by simultaneous attacks in Africa, America, and also in Asiatic waters. After these fleets had set sail in October and November, 1804, Ireland was to be attacked by the Brest fleet now commanded by Gantheaume. Slipping away from the grip of Cornwallis, he was to pass out of sight of land and disembark his troops in Lough Swilly. These troops, 18,000 strong, were under that redoubtable fighter, Augereau; and had they been landed, the history of the world might have been different. Leaving them to revolutionize Ireland, Gantheaume was to make for the English Channel, touch at Cherbourg for further orders, and proceed to Boulogne to convoy the flotilla across: or, if the weather prevented this, as was probable in January, he was to pass on to the Texel, rally the seven Dutch battleships and the transports with their 25,000 troops, beat back down the English Channel and return to Ireland. Napoleon counted on the complete success of one or other of Gantheaume's moves: "Whether I have 30,000 or 40,000 men in Ireland, or whether I am both in England and Ireland, the war is ours."[1]

The objections to the September combination are fairly obvious. It was exceedingly improbable that the three fleets could escape at the time and in the order which Napoleon desired, or that crews enervated by long captivity in port would succeed in difficult operations when thrust out into the wintry gales of the Atlantic and the Channel. Besides, success could only be won after a serious dispersion of French naval resources; and the West Indian expeditions must be regarded as prompted quite as much by a colonial policy as by a determination to overrun England or Ireland.[2]

[1] "Corresp.," No. 8063. See too No. 7996 for Napoleon's plan of carrying a howitzer in the bows of his gun vessels so that his projectiles might *burst in the wood.* Already at Boulogne he had uttered the prophetic words: "We must have shells that will shiver the wooden sides of ships."

[2] James, "Naval History," vol. iii., p. 213, and Chevalier, p. 115,

At any rate, if the Emperor's aim was merely to distract us by widely diverging attacks, that could surely have been accomplished without sending twenty-six sail of the line into American and African waters, and leaving to Gantheaume so disproportionate an amount of work and danger. This September combination may therefore be judged distinctly inferior to that of July, which, with no scattering of the French forces, promised to decoy Nelson away to the Morea and Egypt, while the Toulon and Rochefort squadrons proceeded to Boulogne.

The September schemes hopelessly miscarried. Gantheaume did not elude Cornwallis, and remained shut up in Brest. Missiessy escaped from Rochefort, sailed to the West Indies, where he did some damage and then sailed home again. "He had taken a pawn and returned to his own square."[1] Villeneuve slipped out from Toulon (January 19th, 1805), while Nelson was sheltering from westerly gales under the lee of Sardinia; but the storm which promised to renew his reputation for good luck speedily revealed the weakness of his ships and crews.

"My fleet looked well at Toulon," he wrote to Decrès, Minister of Marine, "but when the storm came on, things changed at once. The sailors were not used to storms: they were lost among the mass of soldiers: these from sea-sickness lay in heaps about the decks: it was impossible to work the ships: hence yard-arms were broken and sails were carried away: our losses resulted as much from clumsiness and inexperience as from defects in the materials delivered by the arsenals."[2]

imply that Villeneuve's fleet from Toulon, after scouring the West Indies, was to rally the Rochefort force and cover the Boulogne flotilla: but this finds no place in Napoleon's September plan, which required Gantheaume first to land troops in Ireland and then convoy the flotilla across if the weather were favourable, or if it were stormy to beat down the Channel with the troops from Holland. See O'Connor Morris, "Campaigns of Nelson," p. 121.

[1] Colomb, "Naval Warfare," p. 18.

[2] Jurien de la Gravière, vol. ii., p. 100. Nelson was aware of the fallacies that crowded Napoleon's brain: "Bonaparte has often

Inexperience and sea-sickness were factors that found no place in Napoleon's calculations; but they compelled Villeneuve to return to Toulon to refit; and there Nelson closed on him once more.

Meanwhile events were transpiring which seemed to add to Napoleon's naval strength and to the difficulties of his foes. On January 4th, 1805, he concluded with Spain a treaty which added her naval resources to those of France, Holland, and Northern Italy. The causes that led to an open rupture between England and Spain were these. Spain had been called upon by Napoleon secretly to pay him the stipulated sum of 72,000,000 francs a year (see p. 437), and she reluctantly consented. This was, of course, a covert act of hostility against England; and the Spanish Government was warned at the close of 1803 that, if this subsidy continued to be paid to France, it would constitute "at any future period, when circumstances may render it necessary, a just cause of war" between England and Spain. Far from complying with this reasonable remonstrance, the Spanish Court yielded to Napoleon's imperious order to repair five French warships that had taken refuge in Ferrol from our cruisers, and in July, 1804, allowed French seamen to travel thither overland to complete the crews of these vessels. Thus for some months our warships had to observe Ferrol, as if it were a hostile port.

Clearly, this state of things could not continue; and when the protests of our ambassador at Madrid were persistently evaded or ignored, he was ordered, in the month of September, to leave that capital unless he received satisfactory assurances. He did not leave until November 10th, and before that time a sinister event had taken place. The British Ministry determined that Spanish treasure-ships from South America should not

made his boast that our fleet would be worn out by keeping the sea, and that his was kept in order and increasing by staying in port; but he now finds, I fancy, if emperors hear truth, that his fleet suffers more in a night than ours in one year."—Nelson to Collingwood, March 13th, 1805.

be allowed to land at Cadiz the sinews of war for France, and sent orders to our squadrons to stop those ships. Four frigates were told off for that purpose. On the 5th of October they sighted the four rather smaller Spanish frigates that bore the ingots of Peru, and summoned them to surrender, thereafter to be held in pledge. The Spaniards, nobly resolving to yield only to overwhelming force, refused ; and in the ensuing fight one of their ships blew up, whereupon the others hauled down their flags and were taken to England. Resenting this action, Spain declared war on December 12th, 1804.

Stripped of all the rodomontade with which French historians have enveloped this incident, the essential facts are as follows. Napoleon compelled Spain by the threat of invasion to pay him a large subsidy : England declared this payment, and accompanying acts, to be acts of war ; Spain shuffled uneasily between the two belligerents but continued to supply funds to Napoleon and to shelter and repair his warships ; thereupon England resolved to cut off her American subsidies, but sent a force too small to preclude the possibility of a sea-fight ; the fight took place, with a lamentable result, which changed the covert hostility of Spain into active hostility.

Public opinion and popular narratives are, however, fashioned by sentiment rather than founded on evidence ; accordingly, Britain's prestige suffered from this event. The facts, as currently reported, seemed to convict her of an act of piracy ; and few persons on the Continent or among the Whig coteries of Westminster troubled to find out whether Spain had not been guilty of acts of hostility and whether the French Emperor was not the author of the new war. Undoubtedly it was his threatening pressure on Spain that had compelled her to her recent action : but that pressure had been for the most part veiled by diplomacy, while Britain's retort was patent and notorious. Consequently, every version of this incident that was based merely on newspaper reports condemned her conduct as brutally piratical ; and only those who have delved into archives have discovered the real

facts of the case.[1] Napoleon's letter to the King of Spain quoted on p. 437 shows that even before the war he was seeking to drag him into hostilities with England, and he continued to exert a remorseless pressure on the Court of Madrid; it left two alternatives open to England, either to see Napoleon close his grip on Spain and wield her naval resources when she was fully prepared for war, or to precipitate the rupture. It was the alternative, *mutatis mutandis*, presented to George III. and the elder Pitt in 1761, when the King was for delay and his Minister was for war at once. That instance had proved the father's foresight; and now at the close of 1804 the younger Pitt might flatter himself that open war was better than a treacherous peace.

In lieu of a subsidy Spain now promised to provide from twenty-five to twenty-nine sail of the line, and to have them ready by the close of March. On his side, Napoleon agreed to guarantee the integrity of the Spanish dominions, and to regain Trinidad for her. The sequel will show how his word was kept.

The conclusion of this alliance placed the hostile navies almost on an equality, at least on paper. But, as the equipment of the Spanish fleet was very slow, Napoleon for the present adhered to his plan of September, 1804, with the result already detailed. Not until March 2nd, 1805, do we find the influence of the Spanish alliance observable in his naval schemes. On that date he issued orders to Villeneuve and Gantheaume, which assigned to the latter most of the initiative, as also the chief com-

[1] Garden, "Traités," vol. viii., pp. 276-290; also Capt. Mahan, "Influence of Sea Power, etc.," vol. ii., ch. xv. *ad fin.* He quotes the opinion of a Spanish historian, Don José de Couto: "If all the circumstances are properly weighed . . . we shall see that all the charges made against England for the seizure of the frigates may be reduced to want of proper foresight in the strength of the force detailed to effect it."—In the Admiralty secret letters (1804-16) I have found the instructions to Sir J. Orde, with the Swiftsure, Polyphemus, Agamemnon, Ruby, Defence, Lively, and two sloops, to seize the treasure-ships. No fight seems to have been expected.

mand after their assumed junction. Gantheaume, with the Brest fleet, after eluding the blockaders, was to proceed first to Ferrol, capture the British ships off that port and, reinforced by the French and Spanish ships there at anchor, proceed across the Atlantic to the appointed rendezvous at Martinique. The Toulon squadron under Villeneuve was at the same time to make for Cadiz, and, after collecting the Spanish ships, set sail for the West Indies. Then the armada was to return with all speed to Boulogne, where Napoleon expected it to arrive between June 10th and July 10th.[1]

Diverse judgments have been passed on this, the last and grandest of Napoleon's naval combinations. On the one hand, it is urged that, as the French fleets had seen no active service, a long voyage was necessary to impart experience and efficiency before matters were brought to the touch in the Straits of Dover; and as Britain and France both regarded their West Indian islands as their most valued possessions, a voyage thither would be certain to draw British sails in eager pursuit. Finally, those islands dotted over a thousand miles of sea presented a labyrinth wherein it would be easy for the French to elude Nelson's cruisers.

On the other hand, it may be urged that the success of the plan depended on too many *ifs*. Assuming that the Toulon and Brest squadrons escaped the blockaders, their subsequent movements would most probably be reported by some swift frigate off Gibraltar or Ferrol. The chance of our divining the French plans was surely as great as that Gantheaume and Villeneuve would unite in the West Indies, ravage the British possessions, and return in undiminished force. The English fleets, after weary months of blockade, were adepts at scouting; their wings covered with ease a vast space, their frigates rapidly signalled news to the flagship, and their concentration was swift and decisive. Prompt to note every varying puff of wind, they bade fair to overhaul their enemies when the chase began in earnest, and when

[1] "Corresp.," No. 8379; Mahan, *ibid.*, vol. ii., p. 149.

once the battle was joined, numbers counted for little: the English crews, inured to fights on the ocean, might be trusted to overwhelm the foe by their superior experience and discipline, hampered as the French now were by the lumbering and defective warships of Spain.

Napoleon, indeed, amply discounted the chances of failure of his ultimate design, the command of the Channel. The ostensible aims of the expedition were colonial. The French fleets were to take on board 11,908 soldiers, of whom three-fourths were destined for the West Indies; and, in case Gantheaume did not join Villeneuve at Martinique, the latter was ordered, after waiting forty days, to set sail for the Canaries, there to intercept the English convoys bound for Brazil and the East Indies.

In the spring and summer of 1805 Napoleon's correspondence supplies copious proof of the ideas and plans that passed through his brain. After firmly founding the new Empire, he journeyed into Piedmont, thence to Milan for his coronation as King of Italy, and finally to Genoa. In this absence of three months from Paris (April-July) many lengthy letters to Decrès attest the alternations of his hopes and fears. He now keeps the possibility of failure always before him: his letters no longer breathe the crude confidence of 1803: and while facing the chances of failure in the West Indies, his thoughts swing back to the Orient:

"According to all the news that I receive, five or six thousand men in the [East] Indies would ruin the English Company. Supposing that our [West] Indian expedition is not fully successful, and I cannot reach the grand end which will demolish all the rest, I think we must arrange the [East] Indian expedition for September. We have now greater resources for it than some time ago."[1]

How tenacious is his will! He here recurs to the plan laid down before Decaen sailed to the East Indies in

[1] Letter of April 29th, 1805. I cannot agree with Mahan (p. 155) that this was intended only to distract us.

March, 1803. Even the prospects of a continental coalition fail to dispel that gorgeous dream. But amid much that is visionary we may discern this element of practicality: in case the blow against England misses the mark, Napoleon has provided himself with a splendid alternative that will banish all thought of failure.

It is needless to recount here the well-known details of Villeneuve's voyage and Nelson's pursuit. The Toulon and Cadiz fleets got clear away to the West Indies, and after a last glance towards the Orient, Nelson set out in pursuit. On the 4th of June the hostile fleets were separated by only a hundred miles of sea; and Villeneuve, when off Antigua, hearing that Nelson was so close, decided forthwith to return to Europe. After disembarking most of his troops and capturing a fleet of fourteen British merchantmen, he sailed for Ferrol, in pursuance of orders just received from Napoleon, which bade him rally fifteen allied ships at that port, and push on to Brest, where he must release Gantheaume.

In this gigantic war game, where the Atlantic was the chess-board, and the prize a world-empire, the chances were at this time curiously even. Fortune had favoured Villeneuve but checked Gantheaume. Villeneuve successfully dodged Nelson in the West Indies, but ultimately the pursuer divined the enemy's scheme of returning to Europe, and sent a swift brig to warn the Admiralty, which was thereby informed of the exact position of affairs on July 8th, that is, twelve days before Napoleon himself knew of the state of affairs. On July 20th, the French Emperor heard, *through English newspapers*, that his fleet was on its return voyage: and his heart beat high with hope that Villeneuve would now gather up his squadrons in the Bay of Biscay and appear before Boulogne in overwhelming force; for he argued that, even if Villeneuve should keep right away from Brest, and leave blockaders and blockaded face to face, he would still be at least sixteen ships stronger than any force that could be brought against him.

But Napoleon was now committing the blunder which

he so often censured in his inferiors. He was "making pictures" to himself, pictures in which the gleams of fortune were reserved for the tricolour flag, and gloom and disaster shrouded the Union Jack; he conceived that Nelson had made for Jamaica, and that the British squadrons were engaged in chasing phantom French fleets around Ireland or to the East Indies. "We have not to do," he said, "with a far-seeing, but with a very proud, Government."

In reality, Nelson was nearing the coast of Portugal, Cornwallis had been so speedily reinforced as to marshal twenty-eight ships of the line off Brest, while Calder was waiting for Villeneuve off Cape Finisterre with a fleet of fifteen battleships. Thus, when Villeneuve neared the north-west of Spain, his twenty ships of the line were confronted by a force which he could neither overwhelm nor shake off. The combat of July 22nd, fought amidst a dense haze, was unfavourable to the allies, two Spanish ships of the line striking their colours to Calder before the gathering fog and gloom of night separated the combatants: on the next two days Villeneuve strove to come to close quarters, but Calder sheered off; thereupon the French, unable then to make Ferrol, put into Vigo, while Calder, ignorant of their position, joined Cornwallis off Brest. This retreat of the British admiral subjected him to a court-martial, and consternation reigned in London when Villeneuve was known to be on the Spanish coast unguarded; but the fear was needless; though the French admiral succeeded in rallying the Ferrol squadron, yet, as he was ordered to avoid Ferrol, he put into Corunna, and on August 15th he decided to sail for Cadiz.

To realize the immense importance of this decision we must picture to ourselves the state of affairs just before this time.

Nelson, delayed by contrary winds and dogged by temporary ill-luck, had made for Gibraltar, whence, finding that no French ships had passed the straits, he doubled back in hot haste northwards, and there is clear

proof that his speedy return to the coast of Spain spread dismay in official circles at Paris. "This unexpected union of forces undoubtedly renders every scheme of invasion impracticable for the present," wrote Talleyrand to Napoleon on August 2nd, 1805.[1] Missing Villeneuve off Ferrol, Nelson joined Cornwallis off Ushant on the very day when the French admiral decided to make for Cadiz. Passing on to Portsmouth, the hero now enjoyed a few days of well-earned repose, until the nation called on him for his final effort.

Meanwhile Napoleon had arrived on August 3rd at Boulogne, where he reviewed a line of soldiery nine miles long. The sight might well arouse his hopes of assured victory. He had ground for hoping that Villeneuve would soon be in the Channel. Not until August 8th did he receive news of the fight with Calder, and he took pains to parade it as an English defeat. He therefore trusted that, in the spirit of his orders to Villeneuve dated July the 26th, that admiral would sail to Cadiz, gather up other French and Spanish ships, and return to Ferrol and Brest with a mighty force of some sixty sail of the line:

"I count on your zeal for my service, on your love for the fatherland, on your hatred of this Power which for forty generations has oppressed us, and which a little daring and perseverance on your part will for ever reduce to the rank of the small Powers: 150,000 soldiers . . . and the crews complete are embarked on 2,000 craft of the flotilla, which, despite the English cruisers, forms a long line of broadsides from Etaples to Cape Grisnez. Your voyage, and it alone, makes us without any doubt masters of England."

Austria and Russia were already marshalling their forces for the war of the Third Coalition. Yet, though menaced by those Powers, to whom he had recently offered the most flagrant provocations, this astonishing man was intent only on the ruin of England, and secretly

[1] "Lettres inédites de Talleyrand," p. 121.

derided their preparations. "You need not" (so he wrote to Eugène, Viceroy of Italy) "contradict the newspaper rumours of war, but make fun of them. . . . Austria's actions are probably the result of fear."—Thus, even when the eastern horizon lowered threateningly with clouds, he continued to pace the cliffs of Boulogne, or gallop restlessly along the strand, straining his gaze westward to catch the first glimpse of his armada. That horizon was never to be flecked with Villeneuve's sails: they were at this time furled in the harbour of Cadiz.

Unmeasured abuse has been showered upon Villeneuve for his retreat to that harbour. But it must be remembered that in both of Napoleon's last orders to him, those of July 16th and 26th, he was required to sail to Cadiz under certain conditions. In the first order prescribing alternative ways of gaining the mastery of the Channel, that step was recommended solely as a last alternative in case of misfortune: he was directed not to enter the long and difficult inlet of Ferrol, but, after collecting the squadron there, to cast anchor at Cadiz. In the order of July 26th he was charged positively to repair to Cadiz: "My intention is that you rally at Cadiz the Spanish ships there, disembark your sick, and, without stopping there more than four days at most, again set sail, return to Ferrol, etc." Villeneuve seems not to have received these last orders, but he alludes to those of July 16th.[1]

These, then, were probably the last instructions he received from Napoleon before setting sail from the roads of Corunna on August 13th. The censures passed on his retreat to Cadiz are therefore based on the supposition that he received instructions which he did not receive.[2] He expressly based his move to Cadiz on Napoleon's orders of July 16th. The mishaps which the Emperor then contemplated as necessitating such a step had, in Villeneuve's eyes, actually happened. The

[1] Jurien de la Gravière, vol. ii., p. 367.

[2] Thiers writes, most disingenuously, as though Napoleon's letters of August 13th and 22nd could have influenced Villeneuve.

admiral considered the fight of July 22nd *la malheureuse affaire;* his ships were encumbered with sick; they worked badly; on August 15th a north-east gale carried away the top-mast of a Spanish ship; and having heard from a Danish merchantman the news—false news, as it afterwards appeared—that Cornwallis with twenty-five ships was to the north, he turned and scudded before the wind. He could not divine the disastrous influence of his conduct on the plan of invasion. He did not know that his master was even then beginning to hesitate between a dash on London or a campaign on the Danube, and that the events of the next few days were destined to tilt the fortunes of the world. Doubtless he ought to have disregarded the Emperor's words about Cadiz and to have struggled on to Brest, as his earlier and wider orders enjoined. But the Emperor's instructions pointed to Cadiz as the rendezvous in case of misfortune or great difficulty. As a matter of fact, Napoleon on July 26th ordered the Rochefort squadron to *meet Villeneuve at Cadiz;* and it is clear that by that date Napoleon had decided on that rendezvous, apparently because it could be more easily entered and cleared than Ferrol, and was safer from attack. But, as it happened, the Rochefort squadron had already set sail and failed to sight an enemy or friend for several weeks.

Such are the risks of naval warfare, in which even the greatest geniuses at times groped but blindly. Nelson was not afraid to confess the truth. The French Emperor, however, seems never to have made an admission which would mar his claim to strategic infallibility. Even now, when the Spanish ships were proved to clog the enterprise, he persisted in merely counting numbers, and in asserting that Villeneuve might still neutralize the force of Calder and Cornwallis. These hopes he cherished up to August 23rd, when, as the next chapter will show, he faced right about to confront Austria. His Minister of Marine, who had more truly gauged the difficulties of all parts of the naval enterprise, continued earnestly to warn him of the terrible risk of burdening Villeneuve's

ships with the unseaworthy craft of Spain and of trusting to this ill-assorted armada to cover the invasion now that their foes had divined its secret. The Emperor bitterly upbraided his Minister for his timidity, and in the presence of Daru, Intendant General of the army, indulged in a dramatic soliloquy against Villeneuve for his violation of orders: "What a navy! What an admiral! What sacrifices for nothing! My hopes are frustrated—Daru, sit down and write"—whereupon it is said that he traced out the plans of the campaign which was to culminate at Ulm and Austerlitz.[1]

The question has often been asked whether Napoleon seriously intended the invasion of England. Certainly the experienced seamen of England, France, and Holland, with few exceptions, declared that the flat-bottomed boats were unseaworthy, and that a frightful disaster must ensue if they were met out at sea by our ships. When it is further remembered that our coasts were defended by batteries and martello towers, that several hundreds of pinnaces and row-boats were ready to attack the flotilla before it could attempt the disembarkation of horses, artillery, and stores, and that 180,000 regulars and militia, aided by 400,000 volunteers, were ready to defend our land, the difficulties even of capturing London will be obvious. And the capture of the capital would not have decided the contest. Napoleon seems to have thought it would. In his voyage to St. Helena he said: "I put all to the hazard; I entered into no calculations as to the manner in which I was to return; I trusted all to the impression the occupation of the capital would have occasioned."[2]—But, as has been shown above (p. 441),

[1] Dupin, "Voyages dans la Grande Bretagne" (tome i., p. 244), who had the facts from Daru. But, as Méneval sensibly says ("Mems.," vol. i., ch. v.), it was not Napoleon's habit dramatically to dictate his plans so far in advance. Certainly, *in military matters*, he always kept his imagination subservient to facts. Not until September 22nd, did he make any written official notes on the final moves of his chief corps; besides, the Austrians did not cross the Inn till September 8th.

[2] Diary of General Bingham, in "Blackwood's Magazine,"

plans had been secretly drawn up for the removal of the Court and the national treasure to Worcester; the cannon of Woolwich were to be despatched into the Midlands by canal; and our military authorities reckoned that the systematic removal of provisions and stores from all the districts threatened by the enemy would exhaust him long before he overran the home counties. Besides, the invasion was planned when Britain's naval power had been merely evaded, not conquered. Nelson and Cornwallis and Calder would not for ever be chasing phantom fleets; they would certainly return, and cut Napoleon from his base, the sea.

Again, if Napoleon was bent solely on the invasion of England, why should he in June, 1805, have offered to Russia and Austria so gratuitous an affront as the annexation of the Ligurian Republic? He must have known that this act would hurry them into war. Thiers considers the annexation of Genoa a "grave fault" in the Emperor's policy—but many have doubted whether Napoleon did not intend Genoa to be the gate leading to a new avenue of glory, now that the success of his naval dispositions was doubtful. Marbot gives the general opinion of military circles when he says that the Emperor wanted to provoke a continental war in order to escape the ridicule which the failure of his Boulogne plans would otherwise have aroused. "The new coalition came just at the right moment to get him out of an annoying situation." The compiler of the Fouché "Memoirs," which, though not genuine, may be accepted as generally correct, took the same view. He attributes to Napoleon the noteworthy words: "I may fail by sea, but not by land; besides, I shall be able to strike the blow before the old coalition machines are ready: the kings have neither activity nor decision of character: I do not fear old Europe." The Emperor also remarked to the Council of State that the expense of all the pre-

October, 1896. The accompanying medal, on the reverse of which are the words "frappée à Londres, en 1804," affords another proof of his intentions.

MEDAL STRUCK TO COMMEMORATE THE RUPTURE OF THE TREATY OF AMIENS, 1803.

Obv. Victory. *L'Hanovre occupé par l'armée française en juin de l'an* 1803. *Frappée de l'argent des mines d'Hanovre l'an* 4 *de Bonaparte.*

Rev. British bulldog. *Le traité d'Amiens rompu par l'Angleterre en mai de l'an* 1803.

HEADS OF NAPOLEON

AND CHARLEMAGNE, 1806.

MEDAL STRUCK TO COMMEMORATE THE INTENDED INVASION FROM BOULOGNE.

Obv. Napoleon. *Rev.* Hercules crushing the sea monster. *Descente en Angleterre—Frappée à Londres en* 1804.

MEDALS.

From Delaroche's "Trésor Numismatique" and Edwards' "Napoleon Medals."

parations at Boulogne was fully justified by the fact that they gave him "fully twenty days' start over all enemies. . . . A pretext had to be found for raising the troops and bringing them together without alarming the Continental Powers: and that pretext was afforded me by the projected descent upon England."[1]

It is also quite possible that his aim was Ireland as much as England. It certainly was in the plan of September, 1804: and doubtless it still held a prominent place in his mind, except during the few days when he pictured Calder vanquished and Nelson scouring the West Indies. Then he doubtless fixed his gaze solely upon London. But there is much indirect evidence which points to Ireland as forming at least a very important part of his scheme. Both Nelson and Collingwood believed him to be aiming at Ireland.[2]

But indeed Napoleon is often unfathomable. Herein lies much of the charm of Napoleonic studies. He is at once the Achilles, the Mercury, and the Proteus of the modern world. The ease with which his mind grasped all problems and suddenly concentrated its force on some new plan may well perplex posterity as it dazed his contemporaries. If we were dealing with any other man than Napoleon, we might safely say that an invasion of England, before the command of the sea had been secured, was infinitely less likely than a descent on Ireland. The landing of a *corps d'armée* there would have provoked a revolution; and British ascendancy would have vanished in a week. Even had Nelson returned and swept the seas, Ireland would have been lost to the United Kingdom; and Britain, exhausted also by the expenses which the Boulogne preparations had compelled her to make for the defence of London, must have succumbed.

If ever Napoleon intended risking all his fortunes on

[1] Marbot, "Mems.," ch. xix; Fouché, "Mems.," part 1; Miot de Melito, "Mems.," vol. ii., ch. i.

[2] See Nelson's letters of August 25th, 1803, and May 1st, 1804; also Collingwood's of July 21st, 1805.

the conquest of England, it can be proved that his mind was gradually cleared of illusions. He trusted that a popular rising would overthrow the British Government: people and rulers showed an accord that had never been known since the reign of Queen Anne. He believed, for a short space, that the flotilla could fight sea-going ships out at sea: the converse was proved up to the hilt. Finally, he trusted that Villeneuve, when burdened with Spanish ships, would outwit and outmanœuvre Nelson!

What then remained after these and many other disappointments? Surely that scheme alone was practicable, in which the command of the sea formed only an unimportant factor. For the conquest of England it was an essential factor. In Ireland alone could Napoleon find the conditions on which he counted for success—a discontented populace that would throng to the French eagles, and a field of warfare where the mere landing of 20,000 veterans would decide the campaign.[1]

And yet it is, on the whole, certain that his expedition for Ireland was meant merely to distract and paralyze the defenders of Great Britain, while he dealt the chief blow at London. Instinct and conviction alike prompted him to make imposing feints that should lead his enemy to lay bare his heart, and that heart was our great capital. His indomitable will scorned the word *impossible*—"a word found only in the dictionary of fools"; he felt England to be the sole barrier to his ambitions; and to crush her power he was ready to brave, not only her stoutest seamen, but also her guardian angels, the winds and storms. Both the man and the occasion were unique in the world's history and must not be judged according to tame probabilities. For his honour was at stake. He was so deeply pledged to make use of the vast preparations at his northern ports that, had all his complex dispositions worked smoothly,

[1] In "F. O.," France, No. 71, is a report of a spy on the interview of Napoleon with O'Connor, whom he made General of Division. See Appendix, p. 510.

he would certainly have attempted a dash at London; and only after some adequate excuse could he consent to give up that adventure.

The excuse was now furnished by Villeneuve's retreat to Cadiz; and public opinion, ignorant of Napoleon's latest instructions on that subject, and knowing only the salient facts of the case, laid on that luckless admiral the whole burden of blame for the failure of the scheme of invasion. With front unabashed and a mind presaging certain triumphs, Napoleon accordingly wheeled his legions eastward to prosecute that alluring alternative, the conquest of England through the Continent.

APPENDIX

[*The two following State Papers have never before been published.*]

NO. I. is a despatch from Mr. Thornton, our *chargé d'affaires* at Washington, relative to the expected transfer of the vast region of Louisiana from Spain to France (see ch. xv. of this vol.).

[In "F O.," America, No. 35.]

"WASHINGTON,
"*26 Jany.*, 1802.

"MY LORD,

". . . About four years ago, when the rumour of the transfer of Louisiana to France was first circulated, I put into Mr. Pickering's hands for his perusal a despatch written by Mr. Fauchet about the year 1794, which with many others was intercepted by one of H.M. ships. In that paper the French Minister urged to his Government the absolute necessity of acquiring Louisiana or some territory in the vicinity of the United States in order to obtain a permanent influence in the country, and he alluded to a memorial written some years before by the Count du Moutier to the same effect, when he was employed as His Most Christian Majesty's Minister to the United States. The project seems therefore to have been long in the contemplation of the French Government, and perhaps no period is more favourable than the present for carrying it into execution.

"When I paid my respects to the Vice-President, Mr. Burr, on his arrival at this place, he, of his own accord, directed conversation to this topic. He owned that he had made some exertion indirectly to discover the truth of the report, and thought he had reason to believe it. He appeared to think that the great armament destined by France to St. Domingo, had this ulterior object in view, and expressed much apprehension that the transfer and colonization of Louisiana were meditated by her with the concurrence or acquiescence of His Maj^{s} Gov^{t}. It was impossible for me to give any opinion on this part of the measure, which, whatever may be its ultimate tendency, presents at first view nothing but danger to His Maj^{s} Trans-Atlantic possessions.

"Regarding alone the aim of France to acquire a preponderating influence in the councils of the United States, it may be very well doubted whether the possession of Louisiana, and the means which she would chuse to employ are calculated to secure that end. Experience seems now to have sanctioned the opinion that if the provinces of Canada had been restored to France at the Peace of Paris, and if from that quarter she had been left to press upon the American frontier, to harass the exterior settlements and to mingle in the feuds of the Indian Tribes, the colonies might still have preserved their allegiance to the parent country and have retained their just jealousy of that system of encroachment adopted by France from the beginning of the last century. The present project is but a continuance of the same system; and neither her power nor her present temper leave room for expectation that she will pursue it with less eagerness or greater moderation than before. Whether, therefore, she attempt to restrain the navigation of the Mississippi or limit the freedom of the port of New Orleans; whether she press upon the Western States with any view to conquest, or seduce them by her principles of fraternity (for which indeed they are well prepared) she must infallibly alienate the Atlantic States and force them into a straiter connection with Great Britain.

"I have scarcely met with a person under whatever party he may rank himself, who does not dread this event, and who would not prefer almost any neighbours to the French: and it seems perfect infatuation in the Administration of this country that they chuse the present moment for leaving that frontier almost defenceless by the reduction of its military establishment.

"I have, etc.,

"[Signed] EDWD THORNTON."

No. II. is a report in "F. O.," France, No. 71, by one of our spies in Paris on the doings of the Irish exiles there, especially O'Connor, whom Napoleon had appointed General of Division in Marshal Augereau's army, then assembling at Brest for the expedition to Ireland. After stating O'Connor's appointment, the report continues:

"About eighty Irishmen were sent to Morlaix to be formed into a company of officers and taught how they were to discipline and instruct their countrymen when they landed in Ireland. McShee, Général de Brigade, commands them. He and Blackwell are, I believe, the only persons among them of any consequence, who have seen actual service. Emmett's brother and McDonald, who were jealous of the attention paid to O'Connor, would not go to

Morlaix. They were prevailed on to go to Brest towards the end of May, and there to join General Humbert. Commandant Dalton, a young man of Irish extraction, and lately appointed to a situation in the Army at Boulogne, translated everything between O'Connor and the War Department at Paris. There is no Irish Committee at Paris as is reported. O'Connor and General Hartry, an old Irishman who has been long in the French service, are the only persons applied to by the French Government, O'Connor for the expedition, and Hartry for the Police, etc., of the Irish in France.

"O'Connor, though he had long tried to have an audience of Bonaparte, never saw him till the 20th of May [1805], when he was presented to him at the levee by Marshal Augereau. The Emperor and the Empress complimented him on his dress and military appearance, and Bonaparte said to him *Venez me voir en particulier demain matin.* O'Connor went and was alone with him near two hours. On that day Bonaparte did not say a word to him respecting his intention on England; all their conversation regarded Ireland. O'Connor was with him again on the Thursday and Friday following. Those three audiences are all that O'Connor ever had in private with Bonaparte.

"He told me on the Saturday evening that he should go to Court the next morning to take public leave of the Emperor and leave Paris as soon as he had received 10,000 livres which Maret was to give him for his travelling expenses, etc., and which he was to have in a day or two. His horses and all his servants but one had set off for Brest some time before.

"Bonaparte told O'Connor, when speaking of the prospect of a continental War, 'la Russie peut-être pourroit envoyer cette année 100,000 hommes contre la France, mais j'ai pour cela assez de monde à ma disposition : je ferois même marcher, s'il le faut, une armée contre la Russie, et si l'Empereur d'Allemagne refusoit un passage à cette armée dans son pays, je la ferois passer malgré lui.' He afterwards said—'il y a plusieurs moyens de détruire l'Angleterre, mais celui de lui ôter Irlande est bon. Je vous donnerai 25,000 bonnes troupes et s'il en arrive seulement 15,000, ce sera assez. Vous aurez aussi 150,000 fusils pour armer vos compatriotes, et un parc d'artillerie légère, des pièces de 4 et de 6 livres, et toutes les provisions de guerre nécessaires.'

"O'Connor endeavoured to persuade Bonaparte that the best way to conquer England was first to go to Ireland, and thence to England with 200,000 Irishmen. Bonaparte said he did not think that would do; *d'ailleurs*, he added, *ce seroit trop long.* They agreed that all the English in Ireland should be exterminated as the whites had been in St. Domingo. Bonaparte assured him that, as soon as he had formed an Irish army, he should be Commander in Chief of the French and Irish forces. Bonaparte directed O'Connor to try to gain over to his interest Laharpe, the Emperor

of Russia's tutor. Laharpe had applied for a passport to go to St. Pétersbourg. He says he will do everything in his power to engage the Emperor to go to war with Bonaparte. Laharpe breathes nothing but vengeance against Bonaparte, who, besides other injuries, turned his back on him in public and would not speak to him. Laharpe was warned of O'Connor's intended visit, and went to the country to avoid seeing him. The Senator Garat is to go to Brest with O'Connor to write a constitution for Ireland. O'Connor is getting out of favor with the Irish in France; they begin to suspect his ambitious and selfish views. There was a coolness between Admiral Truguet and him for some time previous to Truguet's return to Brest. Augereau had given a dinner to all the principal officers of his army then at Paris. Truguet invited all of them to dine with him, two or three days after, except O'Connor. O'Connor told me he would never forgive him for it."

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